United Nations A/56/PV.1

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

1st plenary meeting
Wednesday, 12 September 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

Temporary President: Mr. Holkeri .... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Finland

The Temporary President: I declare open the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Expression of sympathy

The Temporary President: At the outset, I should like, on behalf of us all, to express our deepest condolences to the people and the Government of the host country, the United States of America, for the tragic, unspeakable loss of life resulting from yesterday's horrendous terrorist acts. What happened yesterday goes beyond our imagination and against every principle that the United Nations stands for. The Organization must now stand in support of the United States and intensify its efforts to root out the scourge of terrorism.

Our hearts also go out to the citizens of New York City, the seat of the Organization, and the heroic men and women who have given their lives in the effort to save others. As yesterday's tragedy is bringing together citizens of their city, it should also bring together States Members of the United Nations, so that what happened yesterday will never happen again.

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

The Temporary President: Before calling on representatives to observe a minute of silent prayer or meditation in accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I propose that as we do so we also observe the International Day of Peace on this, the opening day of a regular session of the General Assembly, as proclaimed by the Assembly in its resolutions 36/67 of 30 November 1981 and 52/232 of 4 June 1998, to be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Item 137 of the provisional agenda

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/56/345)

The Temporary President: Before turning to the other items on our agenda, I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/56/345, which has been circulated in the General Assembly Hall this afternoon. It contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs the Assembly that 15

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in documents A/56/345?

It was so decided.

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Credentials of representatives to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

The Temporary President: Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly at the beginning of each session shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

Accordingly, it is proposed that, for the fifty-sixth session, the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: China, Denmark, Jamaica, Lesotho, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Singapore, the United States of America and Uruguay.

May I take it that the States I have mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

It was so decided.

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Election of the President of the General Assembly

The Temporary President: I now invite members of the General Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

May I recall that, in accordance with paragraph 1 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 33/138, the President of the General Assembly at the fifty-sixth session should be elected from among the Asian States.

In this connection, I have been informed by the Chairman of the Group of Asian States that the group has endorsed the candidacy of His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo of the Republic of Korea for the presidency of the General Assembly.

Taking into account the provisions of paragraph 16 of annex VI to the rules of procedure, I therefore declare His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo of the Republic of Korea elected by acclamation President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

I extend my sincere congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo and I invite him to assume the presidency.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort the President to the podium.

Mr. Han Seung-soo took the Chair.

Address by Mr. Han Seung-soo, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session

The President: It is with a most grave and solemn mind that I take this podium, as the horrific events of yesterday cast a pall over our proceedings today. Mere words cannot express the outrage and disgust we doubtless all feel for the vile actions perpetrated in our host country, the United States of America. I condemn in the strongest possible terms these heinous acts of terrorism. I pray for those who lost their lives and on behalf of the General Assembly offer our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the innocent victims. My most profound feelings of sympathy and solidarity also go out to the people and Government of the United States, as well as to the citizens of New York City, at this time of great distress.

These terrorist crimes were, in effect, acts of war against all the world's peace-loving peoples. Their primary target was, by a vicious twist of fate, located in the very city which is home to the world's foremost institution dedicated to promoting world peace. The opening of this session of the General Assembly has been delayed by a day due to this tragedy, but no terrorists can ever deflect this body from the task to which it has dedicated itself since 1945: ending the scourge of war in whatever form it may take, once and for all.

Now let me share my vision of the work of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. At the outset, I would like to express sincere gratitude to my predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, whose outstanding leadership was instrumental in making the fifty-fifth session highly successful. I wish President Holkeri all the best in his future endeavours. I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his untiring efforts and selfless dedication to the highest ideals of the United Nations.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the Member States, particularly the countries of the Asian Group, for the confidence they have placed in me.

As I begin my term of office, I have profoundly mixed feelings. While I am overwhelmed by the honour accorded me and my country, I feel at the same time a tremendous burden of responsibility. This is particularly so as I come from a country that has had a long and unique relationship with the United Nations. Indeed, the United Nations has been closely involved with my country since the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948 and through the post-Korean War recovery period and the economic development of later years.

Following the end of the cold war, the Republic of Korea joined the United Nations in 1991. I would like to believe that my election to this post, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of Korea's admission to the United Nations, constitutes a recognition by the Member States of Korea's increased contribution to the international community.

Fifty-six years ago, the United Nations was born amid hopes for a lasting peace in the wake of two devastating world wars. In the Charter, the United Nations founding fathers set forth lofty goals and principles aimed at promoting international peace and security, as well as the economic and social advancement of all peoples. Success was never easy, and failure often seemed inevitable. However, with its record of both successes and failures, the United Nations has come to be regarded as the sole universal body representing humanity's highest collective aspirations.

When the cold war ended a decade ago, the international community faced new challenges and opportunities. As the danger of global conflict receded, the world was confronted with new threats to peace and development such as regional and sectarian conflicts and the kinds of terrorist acts that reached a crescendo of violence yesterday.

At the same time, the tide of globalization surges ever onward, bringing both benefits and problems in its wake. While greater interdependence and increased cross-border movement have dramatically enhanced the well-being of mankind in many ways, there is a negative side as well, that is, the growing problem of disease and pollution, recurring financial crises, and increasing cross-border crime — especially trafficking in drugs, weapons and illegal migrants. In several of these areas, the various United Nations agencies have been active for decades. Now, more than ever before, the United Nations is required to serve as a focal point for coordinating global efforts to address these new challenges.

In this context, I would like to emphasize the importance of the Millennium Summit held in this Hall last year. The Summit provided a unique opportunity to review the United Nations progress, to assess its achievements and shortcomings, and to chart the way forward. The Millennium Declaration adopted at the end of the Summit is surely the definitive statement of the challenges and tasks facing the United Nations at this stage in its history. As this is the first session of the General Assembly following the Millennium Summit, one of our most important tasks will be follow-up and implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

We all recognize that an important element of the Millennium Declaration is the resolve of leaders to strengthen the United Nations. I think it is noteworthy that they reaffirmed the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. As President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, I will continue the ongoing initiatives to improve the working methods of the Assembly, in close consultation with all Member States. I will also do my best to move forward the discussions on Security Council reform, with the goal of having a more representative, transparent and effective Security Council.

Given the fundamental changes in the international environment, the United Nations role in maintaining peace and security has expanded and become more complex. I therefore attach great importance to improving the United Nations capacity to respond to conflicts in a more effective manner, including consideration of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report. If it is to do its job of maintaining international peace and security, the United Nations needs to be given the necessary tools and resources to carry out peace operations.

Also at the Millennium Summit, the world's leaders pledged their best efforts to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law and to expand protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Freedom and human rights are truly the birthright of all humanity. The Assembly has to work continuously to promote the human rights of all people. But some categories of human beings are more vulnerable than others, and hence more likely to suffer the loss of that precious birthright. Perhaps the most vulnerable are children, women and displaced persons, who need our special concern and protection.

The United Nations should also strengthen and expand its efforts to prevent and suppress terrorism. All forms of terrorism, whatever their motivation, are an assault on human decency and threaten democracy and democratic values, and thus cannot be justified under any circumstances. Yesterday's terrorist attacks not only compel our attention, but underscore anew the urgency of action by the international community, particularly by the United Nations, against this deadly menace. I pledge my best efforts to that end.

In view of the accelerating progress of globalization and the uneven sharing of its benefits, the issue of development is receiving renewed attention and is being considered from fresh perspectives. More specifically, the question of how to ensure that developing countries share in the benefits of globalization in general, and of information and communication technology in particular, requires our urgent consideration and action. In that regard, I would like to call the attention of the Assembly to a couple of the most important issues to command our attention during my presidency of the General Assembly: bridging the digital divide, and the development of Africa.

The explosive growth of information and communication technologies is opening up boundless new possibilities for accelerated economic and social development. But the capacity of individual countries to take advantage of the digital revolution varies greatly. Indeed, the least developed countries, which could gain so much from information and communication technologies, are the very ones that lack the capacity to translate that potential into reality.

In my view, the General Assembly can make useful contributions by calling global attention to the need for bridging the digital divide. Such efforts by the General Assembly would be timely and constructive in the run-up to the World Summits on the Information Society in 2003 and 2005, planned by the International Telecommunication Union.

In their Millennium Declaration, the world's leaders expressed their deep concern, and highlighted the need to bring Africa into the mainstream of world economic development, in the common interest of all humanity. The Governments and peoples of Africa, together with the United Nations system and the donor community, have striven for decades to eradicate poverty and generate sustainable development. Yet all too often, their best efforts have met with setbacks caused by political strife, armed conflict and, since the 1980s, the devastating spread of HIV/AIDS.

Fortunately, the recent summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Lusaka gave a clear political lead on that issue through the new African initiative. I urge that all Member States continue to work together to explore more effective ways and means of assisting African countries in their pursuit of sustainable development.

Having outlined my agenda, I am confident that, working together, we can accomplish what we set out to do. My personal contribution will necessarily be a modest one. All these endeavours to which I will devote myself will be difficult to bring to fruition without the full support and cooperation of all of you. Thus, I humbly ask you to give me your invaluable support and guidance in discharging my duties as President of the General Assembly.

Finally, allow me to suggest that, at this point in history, we should harken back to the original spirit and principles of the United Nations. Let us place first, before anything else, the transcendent vision enshrined in the Charter, namely, the constant and untiring pursuit of peace, security, equality, human rights, fundamental freedoms and economic and social advancement for all the peoples on this planet. While respecting the sovereign rights and legitimate national interests of all nations, let us strive to make our common future a worthy legacy for succeeding generations. Let us, moreover, seek harmony through diversity, peace through dialogue, and mutual prosperity through cooperation. And so, as we assemble here in the world's greatest parliament, let us rededicate ourselves to the founding principles of the United Nations and renew our commitment to complete the unfinished tasks that lie before us.

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Condemnation of terrorist attacks in the United States of America (A/56/L.1)

Special session on the General Assembly on Children (A/56/L.2)

The President: I should now like to consult the Assembly with a view to considering immediately draft resolution A/56/L.1 and draft decision A/56/L.2. In this connection, since both documents have been circulated only this afternoon, it will be necessary to wave the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to consider draft resolution A/56/L.1 and draft decision A/56/L.2.

It was so decided.

The President: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Thank you, Mr. President — and congratulations on your election to this important responsibility. I can only regret, as you yourself have done, that you should have to assume it at such a dark day for the United States, and indeed for the whole world, and that this draft resolution should be the first item of business over which you preside.

Our host country, and this wonderful host city that has been so good to us over five decades, have just been subjected to a terrorist attack such as we had hardly dared to imagine, even in our worst nightmares. We are all struggling to find words to express our sense of grief and outrage, our profound sympathy for the untold numbers of injured and bereaved, and our solidarity with the people and Government of the United States in this hour of trial.

We are struggling, too, to voice our intense admiration and respect for the valiant police officers, fire fighters and workers of all kinds who are engaged in the rescue and recovery effort — and especially for those, far too numerous, whose determination to help their fellow men and women has cost them their own lives.

We are all struggling, above all, to find adequate words of condemnation for those who planned and carried out these abominable attacks. In truth, no such words can be found. And words, in any case, are not enough.

This Assembly has condemned terrorism on numerous occasions. It has said repeatedly that terrorist acts are never justified, no matter what considerations may be invoked. It has called on all States to adopt measures, in accordance with the Charter and other relevant provisions of international law, to prevent terrorism and strengthen international cooperation against it.

We must now go further.

Earlier today, as you know, the Security Council expressed its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to yesterday's attacks and to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter.

I trust that it will indeed take such steps, and that this Assembly — and all its members — will follow suit. All nations of the world must be united in their solidarity with the victims of terrorism, and in their determination to take action — both against the terrorists themselves and against all those who give them any kind of shelter, assistance or encouragement.

I trust that that message will go out loud and clear to the whole world from every member of this Assembly, which represents the whole world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): On behalf of the African Group, it is my honour, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Clearly, this is neither the day nor the time for any celebration. I hope there will be another appropriate time for us to welcome you once more.

The tragedy that befell the people of the United States is senseless, horrific, and totally beyond belief. On behalf of the African Group, allow me to express our sincere and heartfelt condolences to President George W. Bush, the Government and the people of the United States. Our hearts go out particularly to the people of New York, and especially to our colleagues at the United States Mission to the United Nations, led by Ambassador James B. Cunningham.

For those of us who have the honour to serve in the United Nations, yesterday's tragic events serve to remind us of the heavy responsibility we all bear. We would like to assure you, Sir, of our fullest support and cooperation. We are confident that under your leadership we will make significant progress in addressing global challenges. We remain deeply shocked and distressed at the callous terrorist attacks of yesterday. We hope that the perpetrators of these cowardly acts will soon face the full might of the law. We have no doubt that all members of the international community will cooperate in seeing that justice is done.

The tragedies in Washington, D.C.; New York; and Pennsylvania have brought home the unrelenting threat that international terrorism poses to all States. It is now clearer than ever that no one is safe from terrorism. Today it is the people of the United States who are in tears. In truth, it is the whole world that is weeping. The challenge that the United Nations confronts is to intensify our collective efforts to live up to the preamble of the United Nations Charter, which calls upon us to

> "practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security".

Therefore, it is my honour to express the support of the African Group for the two draft resolutions that are before the Assembly.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam, who will make a statement on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau (Viet Nam): Sir, on behalf of the Asian Group, I wish to extend to you the warmest congratulations on the occasion of your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We are fully confident that with your diplomatic skills, you will lead this session to a fruitful conclusion.

We all are profoundly shocked by the acts of barbarism that took place yesterday in New York and in Washington, D.C., which left thousands dead and thousands of others wounded. We strongly condemn these terrorist acts, as they constitute a naked insult to the conscience of humankind.

On behalf of the Asian Group, I wish to convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of the United States of America, to the cities of New York and Washington, and to the families of the bereaved.

The Asian Group fully supports the draft resolution, contained in document A/56/L.1, condemning these terrorist attacks.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic, who will make a statement on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Galuška (Czech Republic): Mr. President, I have the honour to speak here today on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

The purpose of today's plenary meeting was to open the new session of the General Assembly. However, under the shadow of the horrifying tragedy that has struck New York; Washington, D.C.; and the whole of the United States, I feel that it is my duty, first of all, to raise our voice in protest against what we witnessed yesterday. Members of the Group of Eastern European States unanimously condemn these terrorist acts, which we perceive to be aimed not only at the United States of America but at the whole civilized world — indeed, the whole of humanity.

Let me express our Governments' deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims, their families and to the people and the Government of the United States.

We express our readiness to unite to strengthen immediately national and international efforts to prevent and suppress terrorism through increased cooperation and the full implementation of the relevant international anti-terrorist conventions, Security Council resolutions and national and regional security measures. I am convinced that the Group of Eastern European States, for its part, will unanimously support draft resolution A/56/L.1, which you, Sir, have so rightly proposed.

Given the circumstances, our work during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly will be extremely challenging and responsible. I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election, and, at the same time, to express in advance my profound appreciation for the demanding work which lies ahead and which, I am sure, you will carry out in an excellent manner. We believe that, under your able leadership, we will continue to implement the necessary steps towards the fulfilment of the goals of the Millennium Summit Declaration.

I would also like to use this opportunity to express the appreciation and gratitude of the Group of Eastern European States to your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, for his active role and devoted work as President of the General Assembly. We hope that his legacy will inspire us during this session of the General Assembly as well.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Guyana, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Ishmael (Guyana): I should like first of all, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, to express sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. You are bringing to that post a wealth of experience and skills from an illustrious career in academia and from the ministerial and other appointments that you have held at the highest levels of government. The Latin American and Caribbean Group has every confidence that you will provide the leadership and vision needed at this critical juncture in the history of this Organization, as significant developments in international relations continue to have an important impact on the work and activities of the United Nations.

I should also like at this time to convey the Group's appreciation to the immediate past President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Ambassador Holkeri of Finland, for his excellent stewardship over the past year.

The Latin American and Caribbean Group welcomes draft resolution A/56/L.1, which has just been introduced in the Assembly. The Group takes this opportunity to strongly condemn the almost unimaginable tragedy that occurred yesterday — a disastrous series of cruel and barbaric acts in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania that resulted in the loss of many, many innocent lives. We extend heartfelt sympathy to the Government and the people of the United States, and particularly to the victims of the dastardly acts. We share the pain of the residents of the host city, New York, and salute the courage of the fire fighters, police officers and others who gave their lives in a display of valour and courage that will be remembered forever.

The terrorist acts of yesterday must strengthen the resolve of the international community to condemn in the strongest possible terms all forms of terrorism, which are a threat to international peace and security. The Group reaffirms that those responsible must be brought to justice, and we stand in full support of the Government and the people of the United States at this time.

We give our full support to draft resolution A/56/L.1, as well as to the resolution adopted this morning by the Security Council on the matter of international terrorism.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Greece, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. Gounaris (Greece): I would like, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. Indeed, I hope to have another, more propitious opportunity to welcome you in the future.

I would like, on behalf of the Western European and Other States Group, to condemn in the strongest possible terms yesterday's terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere in the United

States. It is a tragedy on an unprecedented scale that challenges all humanity. There can be no excuse or justification for these acts.

I would like to express our full solidarity with the Government of the United States and the American people for the hideous acts that led to the tragic loss of human life and extend our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims. These horrendous acts were an attack not only on the United States but on humanity itself and on the values and freedoms we all share. However, the life and work of our societies will continue undeterred.

We appeal to all States to work closely together to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of yesterday's outrageous acts. The United Nations should spare no effort towards our common goal of preventing and suppressing terrorist attacks everywhere in the world. In this respect, we fully support draft resolution A/56/L.1 and draft decision A/56/L.2, just presented to the General Assembly.

The President: We have heard from representatives of all the regional groups.

I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, as the host country.

Mr. Cunningham (United States): First, on behalf of the United States, I, too, would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to pledge my Government's support for the success of this session.

Obviously, the hearts of all Americans are heavy today. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your words of condolence and sympathy for the victims and their families. I would like to personally convey the gratitude of President Bush and the American people to all the many world leaders and all the others throughout the world who have shown their support and offered their assistance in this time of grief. I would also like to say a special word of appreciation to the Secretary-General for his condolences and, particularly, for his remarks about the city of New York and its public servants and his call for a firm and united response.

We in this Hall are all New Yorkers at this time of tragedy. I have been struck by how many of you have expressed to me that sentiment. Indeed, unfortunately, many non-Americans will be counted among the victims of this attack. We are all grateful to the men and women — police, fire fighters, doctors and nurses — who have shown tremendous heroism in coping with the catastrophic aftermath of the terrible events of 11 September 2001. Our thoughts and prayers go to all the victims and their families. We will grieve, and we will heal.

Your decision, Mr. President, to open the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly was the right one. I appreciate the support and condolences expressed by the United Nations membership and the condemnation and sense of resolve expressed in the comments today. Together, we have demonstrated here, in the historic Hall of the General Assembly, that we are united and strong in the face of terror.

In his statement on the attacks of 11 September and his decision to evacuate United Nations Headquarters, the Secretary-General recognized that the attack on the United States was also an attack on the United Nations. The entire international community and the shared values upon which this institution was founded are under assault. Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), adopted just hours ago, demonstrates the determination of the international community to confront and triumph over this evil, as will the General Assembly draft resolution that we are about to address.

Yesterday's attack requires that we choose sides between the values of human rights and democracy, held dear by all decent people, and terrorism and the law of the jungle. There are those who oppose terrorism and those who use it. There should be no doubt that we will deal with those who support and harbour terrorists as we deal with the terrorists themselves.

Because this attack struck at all of us, it is right that we should work towards a coalition to defend our shared values against terrorism. Working in coalition, we can multiply the effectiveness of our response. The victims of this attack and their families need our prayers and the certain knowledge of a unified response. We owe to them and to ourselves swift action to find those responsible for these attacks and to bring them to justice.

None of us or our children will forget yesterday's horrifying images. They will become unfortunate but indelible icons of the twenty-first century. Let them serve as a constant reminder of the need to eliminate this scourge and of the need for determination and action to do so.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting.

I thank all representatives for their kind words addressed to me on my assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/56/L.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/56/L.1 was adopted (resolution 56/1).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/56/L.2.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision A/56/L.2 was adopted.

The President: I call on the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I think we will soon be taking a decision on the summit for children and that, if we decide to postpone it because of this force majeure, I would want to plead with the General Assembly that we keep our concern for children uppermost in our minds. This is only a postponement, not a cancellation, and the issue is still very much with us.

I think we should stay the course and adopt a concrete agenda for action for this decade. I think that, at this critical stage, we cannot afford to fail the children or wrangle indefinitely over text and documents. I believe that the draft outcome document for the special session is so close to being finalized. I would urge representatives that, despite the postponement, we keep up with that work and take up the issue as soon as next week. I think that, within a relatively short period, with good will and determination, we can have an agreed text. We are close and I do not want us to postpone it or relax because the meeting is not taking place next week. That is my plea.

The President: I should now like to refer to the two-day high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership.

By decision 55/479 of 12 April 2001, the General Assembly decided that the two-day high-level dialogue would take place on Monday and Tuesday, 17 and 18 September 2001. However, after consultations with the Chairmen of the regional Groups, there is an agreement that the two day high-level dialogue should now take place on Thursday and Friday, 20 and 21 September 2001, instead.

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly decides to hold the two-day high-level dialogue on Thursday and Friday, 20 and 21 September 2001?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to inform members that the first meetings of the six Main Committees will take place consecutively tomorrow afternoon, Thursday, 13 September 2001, at 3 p.m. in the General Assembly Hall for the purpose of electing their respective Chairmen.

Immediately thereafter, the General Assembly will hold its second plenary meeting to elect its Vice-Presidents.

I call on the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I apologize for asking to speak, but I believe that I will be expressing a general view in what I am going to propose.

It is a kind of humanitarian addendum to the resolution we have just adopted. In this very tragic moment, it is our duty to offer our services to New York City and its courageous people. The members of the United Nations diplomatic community are not only parking-rules violators. We do love this city. We do love New York. We are a part of this great city and we want to help it.

Therefore, I would like to request the Secretary-General to establish, through the United Nations medical service, a United Nations diplomatic blood-donation centre to make our modest contribution to the ongoing New York City rescue process. I call upon all representatives to support this proposal.

The Secretary-General: I think the proposal of the representative of Azerbaijan has had a very good response from the ambassadors and representatives here. That means that the medical service will have no problems and will see lots of people queuing up to give blood.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.

United Nations

A/56/PV.2

Official Records

General Assembly

Fifty-sixth session

2nd plenary meeting

Thursday, 13 September 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han .... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Election of the officers of the Main Committees

The President: I should like to inform members that the following representatives have been elected Chairmen of the six Main Committees of the Assembly and are accordingly members of the General Committee for the fifty-sixth session:

First Committee: Mr. André Erdós (Hungary)

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee): Mr. Hasmy Agam (Malaysia)

Second Committee: Mr. Francisco Seixas da Costa (Portugal)

Third Committee: Mr. Fuad Mubarak Al-Hinai (Oman)

Fifth Committee: Mr. Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)

Sixth Committee: Mr. Pierre Lelong (Haiti)

I congratulate the Chairmen on their election.

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly

The President: Pursuant to rule 31 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly.

All members of the General Assembly are eligible in this election except those already represented in the General Committee, namely, those countries whose representatives have been elected to the presidency of the General Assembly or to the chairmanships of the Main Committees.

In accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the annex to resolution 33/138, the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session shall be elected according to the following pattern:

Six representatives from African States;

Four representatives from Asian States;

One representative from an Eastern European State;

Three representatives from Latin American and Caribbean States;

Two representatives from Western European and other States;

Representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

In accordance with paragraph 16 of annex VI to the rules of procedure, the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly by secret ballot will be dispensed with when the number of candidates

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corresponds to the number of seats to be filled. We shall proceed accordingly.

I shall now read the names of the endorsed candidates:

African States: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

Asian States: Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Saudi Arabia.

Eastern European States: Republic of Moldova.

Latin American and Caribbean States: Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay.

Western European and other States: Greece, Malta.

Since the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each region, I declare those candidates elected, in addition to the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The following States have therefore been elected to vice-presidencies of the General Assembly: Cambodia, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Mauritania, Nepal, Nicaragua, Paraguay, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the States which have been elected Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly.

With the Chairmen of the six Main Committees and the 21 Vice-Presidents elected, the General Committee for the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly has now been fully constituted in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure.

The 1st meeting of the General Committee will be held on Friday, 14 September 2001, at 10 a.m., in Conference Room 4.

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/56/322)

The President: The Assembly will now turn its attention to document A/56/322, which contains a letter dated 30 August 2001 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly. Members are aware that, pursuant to section 1, paragraph 7, of Assembly resolution 40/243, no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during the main part of a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

As indicated in the letter I have just mentioned, the Committee on Conferences recommended that the General Assembly authorize, among others, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, as well as the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to meet during the main part of the fifty-sixth session.

Having been informed by the Secretariat that the meetings of these three subsidiary organs will begin in the first week of the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, may I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences for these three subsidiary organs?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President: I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen Jian (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): I should like to take this opportunity to draw the attention of all delegations to the note verbale that has been made available during the course of this meeting.

As indicated in the note verbale, and in view of the postponement of the special session of the General Assembly on children in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/401, it would be very helpful for the Secretariat in updating the list of speakers for the general debate, to be held from 24 September to 5 October 2001, if Member States could communicate their level of representation to the Secretariat by Monday, 17 September 2001, before 5 p.m.

The meeting rose 3.55 p.m.

United Nations A/56/PV.3

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

3rd plenary meeting

Wednesday, 19 September 2001, 11 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han .... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Organization of work of the fifty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

First report of the General Committee (A/55/250)

The President: The Assembly will consider the first report of the General Committee, which has been circulated in document A/56/250. I will refer to specific sections and paragraphs of the report which contain recommendations for consideration by the Assembly.

The General Committee, in paragraph 2 of its report, draws the attention of the General Assembly to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII and VIII of its rules of procedure. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of those provisions?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 3, the General Committee took note of annex I, entitled "Guidelines on the rationalization of the agenda of the General Assembly", to General Assembly resolution 48/264 of 29 July 1994, "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly"; the annex to General Assembly resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations system"; and paragraph 1 of resolution 52/163 of 15 December 1997, entitled "Amendment to rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly".

The provisions of the resolutions are reflected in the document before the General Assembly under the relevant sections.

In paragraph 4, the General Committee took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/264 (document A/52/856) and resolution 51/241 (document A/52/855).

We shall now examine section II of the report, which deals with the organization of the session.

In section II.A, paragraph 6, the General Committee took note of paragraph 20 of the annex to resolution 55/285 of 7 September 2001, dealing with each Vice-President of the Assembly designating, at the beginning of each session, a liaison person for the duration of the session.

We next turn to section II B, dealing with the rationalization of work of the General Assembly.

In paragraph 8, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 5 of the annex to resolution 45/45, recommending that certain Main Committees meet in sequential order. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 8?

It was so decided.

The President: Before proceeding to paragraph 9, I should like to draw the attention of

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members first to paragraph 18, dealing with the dates of the general debate.

In this connection, I should like to inform members that I have consulted with the Chairmen of regional groups, and it was understood that the general debate, which was envisaged to take place from Monday, 24 September, to Friday, 5 October 2001, will be scheduled for a later date.

The new dates for the general debate will be decided as soon as possible, in close consultation with the host country and Member States.

We now turn to paragraph 9, in which the General Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraphs 30, 31 and 36 of the annex to resolution 51/241, providing that the Main Committees should hold organizational meetings before the commencement of the general debate and meet in substantive sessions only after the end of the general debate; and that the First and Fourth Committees should meet, to the extent feasible, in a sequential manner.

However, taking into account that the general debate will be scheduled for a later date, I should like to inform members that the Chairmen and the Secretaries of the Main Committees are currently reorganizing their schedule of work plan in order to be able to start their work earlier. Some Main Committees may start their work as early as next week.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees that the Main Committees should meet in substantive sessions as soon as possible at the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 10, the General Committee took note of paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 52/163, which amends the first sentence of rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read:

> "Each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur."

In paragraph 11, the General Committee took note of the fact that measures introduced to reduce costs relating to overtime would be strictly enforced.

We now turn to Section II.C, on the opening date of the session.

In paragraph 12, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to resolution 55/14 of 3 November 2000, by which the General Assembly amended rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read as follows:

> "The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday following the second Monday in September."

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 12?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to section II.D, on the closing date of the fifty-sixth session.

In paragraph 13, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that the fifty-sixth session should recess not later than Tuesday, 11 December 2001, and close on Monday, 9 September 2002.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 14, the General Committee also recommends to the Assembly that the First Committee should complete its work by Friday, 9 November; the Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee by Friday, 16 November; the Sixth Committee by Friday, 23 November; the Third Committee by Wednesday, 28 November; and the Second and the Fifth Committees by Friday, 7 December 2001.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We next turn to section II.E, concerning the schedule of meetings.

With regard to paragraph 15, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. promptly for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to remind members that, for the afternoon meetings, I intend to begin promptly at 3 p.m.

In the same paragraph, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that, as a cost-saving measure, plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, including informals, be adjourned by 6 p.m. and that no meetings be held on weekends. The Committee further recommends to the General Assembly that this cost-saving measure should also apply, for the remainder of 2001, to meetings listed on the calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 16, the General Committee recommends that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the requirement of the presence of at least one third of the members to declare a plenary meeting open and permit the debate to proceed, and of at least one quarter of the members to declare a meeting of a Main Committee open and permit the debate to proceed.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In this connection, I should like to endorse strongly the practical suggestion made at previous sessions for each delegation to designate someone to be present at the scheduled time. I genuinely hope that all delegations will cooperate.

In paragraph 17, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that delegations should be reminded of the utmost importance of punctuality.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In that regard, I should like to impress upon members that a 10-minute delay for the start of every meeting at Headquarters would result in a waste of approximately $800,000 a year. I therefore sincerely hope that all delegations will make a special effort to cooperate in this regard, so that all meetings can start promptly at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The next section — section II.F — deals with the general debate.

Members will recall that paragraph 18 was dealt with earlier. In paragraph 19, the General Committee took note of the fact that the general debate will take place in accordance with the relevant provision of the annex to resolution 51/241.

In paragraph 20, the Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 21 of the annex to resolution 51/241, whereby the General Assembly indicated a voluntary guideline of up to 20 minutes for each statement in the general debate.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 20?

It was so decided.

The President: In this regard, I should like to remind delegations of the request by the Secretariat that speakers deliver their speeches at a normal speed within the given time frame at all times to allow for proper interpretation.

In paragraph 21, the General Committee draws the General Assembly's attention to the decision taken previously by the Assembly to strongly discourage the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered. The General Committee recommends that this provision should also apply during the fifty-sixth session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Committee also recommends to the General Assembly that, after delivering their statements, speakers in the general debate should leave the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the Assembly also approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to section II.G.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions concerning explanations of vote and right of reply contained in paragraph 22?

It was so decided.

The President: May I further take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to limit points of order to five minutes, as recommended in paragraph 23?

I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 24, in connection with the length of statements, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241, which provides that outside the general debate, there shall be a 15-minute time limit in plenary meetings and in the Main Committees.

In paragraph 25, the Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 23 of the report (A/52/855) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 51/241, which states that since in plenary meetings the length of statements in debates other than the general debate averages eight minutes, the General Assembly may wish to review the recommendation contained in paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 25?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions regarding the length of statements contained in paragraph 26?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.H deals with records of meetings.

In paragraph 27, the General Committee took note of the fact that verbatim records would be provided during the fifty-sixth session for the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and for meetings of the First Committee, and that summary records would be provided for the meetings of the General Committee and the other Main Committees of the Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 28 concerning transcriptions of the debates of some of the meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly also approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 29 that the practice of not reproducing in extenso statements made in a Main Committee be maintained for the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.I concerns concluding statements in the General Assembly and the Main Committees.

I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this section.

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.J concerns resolutions.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 31 to 34?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to Section II.K, concerning documentation.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provision relating to reports of the Secretary-General or subsidiary organs contained in paragraph 35?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 36, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to the annex to decision 55/488 of 7 September 2001, reiterating that the terms "takes note of" and "notes" are neutral terms that constitute neither approval nor disapproval.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 36?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 37, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/264 and to paragraph 5 of section C of resolution 54/248 of 23 December 1999, which emphasize that documentation should be available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of the documents simultaneously in each of the six official languages of the General Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 37?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 38, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 32 of the annex to resolution 51/241, appealing to all bodies to exercise restraint in making proposals containing requests for new reports and to consider integrating, biennializing and triennializing the presentation of reports.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this paragraph?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 39, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 55/285, on the need for Member States to take concrete action to implement paragraph 32 of the annex to resolution 51/241, including by requesting more integrated reports.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 39?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 40, the General Committee further draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 17 of the annex to resolution 55/285, which provides that Member States and entities of the United Nations system should make a serious effort to submit their replies and inputs to requests for information or views pursuant to resolutions of the General Assembly within the prescribed deadlines.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 40?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.L refers to questions related to the programme budget.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 41 to 43?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 44, which concerns subparagraph 13 (d) of decision 34/401, the General Committee draws the Assembly's attention to the observations by the Secretary-General that the preparation of a statement of programme budget implications by the Secretary-General may take a few days. In addition, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee need adequate time to review the programme budget implications of a draft resolution before the draft resolution can be acted on by the Assembly.

The Secretary-General thus considers it desirable that Member States submit proposals sufficiently in advance to avoid the cancellation of meetings and the postponement of consideration of items.

May I take it that the Assembly takes notes of the observations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 44?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 45, the General Committee, at the suggestion of the Secretary-General, also draws the attention of the General Assembly to section VI of its resolution 45/248 B of 21 December 1990, on procedures for administrative and budgetary matters, and to resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, by which the provisions of resolution 45/248 B were reaffirmed.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraph 45?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.M concerns observances and commemorative meetings.

We turn first to paragraph 46. The General Committee recommends that, with the exception of the anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly should adopt the suggested format for commemorative meetings, including limiting each statement to 15 minutes.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations contained in paragraph 46?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly also approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 47 regarding the scheduling of observances and commemorative meetings?

It was so decided.

The President: I now invite the General Assembly to turn to section II.N, which refers to special conferences.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 48 to 50?

It was so decided.

The President: In section II.O, concerning meetings of subsidiary organs, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly, on the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, that the subsidiary organs referred to in paragraph 51 be authorized to meet during the main part of the fifty-sixth session.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to paragraph 52, regarding a resumed third session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held from 15 to 19 October 2001.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 52?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to section III of the report of the General committee, relating to the adoption of the agenda. This section starts at paragraph 53.

I would first recall rule 23 of the rules of procedure, which provides that

> "Debate on the inclusion of an item in the agenda, when that item has been recommended for inclusion by the General Committee, shall be limited to three speakers in favour of, and three against, the inclusion."

I should like to stress that at this time we are not discussing the substance of any item.

With regard to paragraph 54, may I consider that it is the wish of the Assembly to direct its Main Committees to review their agenda with a view to streamlining their programmes of work, as suggested in the paragraph?

It was so decided.

The President: With regard to paragraph 55, may I urge members of the Assembly to give careful thought to the suggestion by the Secretary-General, taking into account especially paragraphs 23 to 26 of the annex to resolution 51/241, to consider deferring to a later session items for which decisions and action are not required at the present session.

In paragraph 56, the General Committee took note of paragraphs 3 to 6 and 8 of the annex to resolution 55/285, which read as follows:

> "3. All cooperation items shall be clustered under an item entitled 'Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations' and individual cooperation items shall become sub-items of that item.
>
> "4. Practical measures to implement the clustering shall be taken in September 2001 by the General Assembly in conjunction with the adoption of the agenda of its fifty-sixth session.
>
> "5. The cooperation items shall be biennialized, starting at the fifty-seventh session, and shall appear in the agenda of the General Assembly thereafter at odd-numbered sessions.
>
> "6. Pursuant to the above decision, the biennialization shall be reflected in each related resolution, starting at the fifty-sixth session, as appropriate.
>
> "8. Any resolution under individual sub-items shall remain separate."

In paragraph 57, the General Committee also took note of paragraphs 10 and 11 of the annex to resolution 55/285, which read as follows:

> "10. The following items shall be considered by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and thereafter biennially:
>
> '(a) Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic;
>
> '(b) Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies;

'(c) United Nations reform: measures and proposals;

'(d) The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti;

'(e) Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.'"

"11. The following item shall continue to be considered biennially, at even-numbered sessions: 'Elimination of coercive measures as a means of political and economic compulsion'."

In paragraph 59, with regard to items 21 to 32 of the draft agenda concerning cooperation, the General Committee recommends the inclusion of a new item 21, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", with items 21 to 32 of the draft agenda becoming sub-items (a) to (l) of the new item 21.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 60, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 106 of the draft agenda, entitled, "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", should be deferred to the fifty-seventh session, and that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 61, in connection with item 182 of the draft agenda, entitled "Observer status for the International Development Law Institute in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 62, in connection with item 183 of the draft agenda, entitled "Observance of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 63, the General Committee recommends that item 184 of the draft agenda, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum", be included in the agenda of the current session as sub-item (m) of new item 21.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 64, in connection with item 185 of the draft agenda, entitled "Observer status for the International Hydrographic Organization in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 65, in connection with item 186 of the draft agenda, entitled "Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 66, in connection with item 187 of the draft agenda, entitled "International Convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In respect of paragraph 67, the General Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 188 of the draft agenda.

In paragraph 68, in connection with item 189 of the draft agenda, entitled "Peace, security and reunification on the Korean peninsula", the General Committee recommends the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 69, in connection with item 190 of the draft agenda, entitled "Observer status for Partners in Population and Development in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the agenda which the General Committee recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

In accordance with past practice, we shall follow the numbering given in paragraph 70 of the General Committee's report contained in document A/56/250 and, where it seems appropriate, we shall consider items in groups. I should like to remind members once again that, at present, we are not discussing the substance of any item, except when such discussion can assist the Assembly in deciding whether or not to include an item in the agenda.

Items 1 to 6 have already been dealt with. We turn to items 7 to 20. May I remind delegations that we are dealing only with the question of the inclusion of the items.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the new item 21 with sub-items (a) to (m). May I take it that item 21 with sub-items (a) to (m) are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that items 22 to 63 are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: I now invite members to turn to items 64 to 84, relating to disarmament.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Now we turn to items 85 to 94. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we come to items 95 to 107, relating to international economic issues. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Items 108 to 119 relate to social and humanitarian questions. May I take it that these items are also included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, may I take it that items 120 to 158, dealing with administrative and financial questions, are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to items 159 to 168, dealing with legal matters.

If there is no objection, I will take it that these items are included in the agenda.

It was so decided.

The President: The next item is item 169.

May I take it that this item is included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: With regard to items 170 to 176, members will recall that the General Assembly has already decided to include these items in the agenda of the current session.

We now turn to section IV of the report of the General Committee, on allocation of items.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 71 to 74?

It was so decided.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. de Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): The horrifying magnitude of the terrorist attacks of 11 September requires the international community to become fully conscious that international terrorism constitutes a very grave threat to all humanity and the security of all.

Unanimously and most vigorously, the General Assembly reiterated last week the urgent need to strengthen international cooperation to prevent and eliminate acts of terrorism.

In order to give the absolutely necessary priority to the struggle against international terrorism, I would propose, on behalf of the European Union, that the initial debate of the General Assembly on item 166 of the provisional agenda, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", be held in plenary meeting as soon as possible, on the understanding that the technical aspects of this item will continue to be examined in the Sixth Committee.

This is my request.

The President: Members have heard the proposal by the representative of Belgium that the initial debate on item 166 be held in plenary meeting as early as possible, on the understanding that the consideration of technical aspects of that item will remain in the Sixth Committee.

I give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Forgive me for coming in now. I am actually speaking in support of this issue being considered in plenary. However, I just want to point out that in the light of the fact that we have been advised that we cannot bring our high-level officials into the city at this stage because of the tragedy affecting the people of the city of New York, it should be noted that we from the African Group — and I am sure I am speaking for the entire group — have been advised that our ministers can come only when the new date of the general debate has been set. When the debate on this subject takes place, we will not be able to be represented at the highest level because we have advised our capitals to cancel their schedules and await a new date being set for the general debate.

I just want to put that on record because, if the meeting does take place and some other regions are represented at the ministerial level or higher, it should not be read as a statement that those of us from Africa did not want to participate in it. We are fully in support and think this is a wonderful idea, but, frankly, we would have preferred that this debate take place in the general debate, when we would really be represented at the highest level with no doubt whatsoever. If it needs to take place sooner, that is fine, but let us put this on record so that a certain impression will not be created by our possibly coming at a lower level of representation than other regions.

The President: We will take that into consideration.

If there is no objection or further statement of support, may I take it that the General Assembly adopts the proposal by the representative of Belgium, supported by the representative of South Africa?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 78 to 84. We shall take up the recommendations one by one.

Before we proceed, may I remind members that the item numbers refer to the agenda contained in paragraph 70 of the report before us, document A/56/250.

We turn first to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (a), which concerns item 10 and relates, inter alia, to the timing of a brief presentation by the Secretary-General on his annual report on the work of the Organization.

Inasmuch as paragraph 7 of the annex to resolution 51/241 stipulates that the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization shall be considered in plenary meetings of the General Assembly immediately after the general debate, and in view of the scheduling of the general debate for future dates, the General Assembly could begin consideration of item 10 on Monday, 17 September 2001.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the General Assembly decides that consideration of item 10 will begin on Monday, 17 September 2001?

It was so decided.

The President: Furthermore, inasmuch as paragraph 10 of the annex to resolution 51/241 requests "the Secretary-General to introduce the report orally at an appropriate time" and since at previous sessions the General Assembly had heard a brief presentation by the Secretary-General on his annual report in the morning prior to the opening of the general debate, the first order of business under agenda item 10 on Monday, 17 September 2001, will therefore be the brief presentation by the Secretary-General on his annual report.

The list of speakers for item 10 is open.

May I also take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 14 of the annex to resolution 55/285?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (b) relating to item 18.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to paragraph 78 (c), relating to item 21, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations".

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 78 (c)?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (d) relating to item 25, entitled "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".

May I take it that it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 78 (d)?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (e) concerning item 45. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In connection with paragraph 78 (f), relating to item 62, the General Committee recommends that the General Assembly allocate the item at an appropriate time during the session. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (g) relating to item 171, entitled "Observance of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 78 (h) relating to item 175, entitled "Peace, security and reunification on the Korean peninsula".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to the recommendation in paragraph 79, relating to item 74, entitled "General and complete disarmament".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves the recommendation pertaining to item 74?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraph 80, relating to item 97 (c), entitled "High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership".

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 80 pertaining to item 97 (c)?

It was so decided.

The President: In this connection, I should like to inform members that the high-level dialogue, in addition to plenary meetings, will consist of two ministerial round tables-cum-informal panels that will take place in the morning and afternoon of Thursday, 20 September.

We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 81 (a), relating to item 27, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that item 27 be allocated to the Third Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 81 (b), relating to item 108, entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family".

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 81 (b)?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 81 (c), relating to item 112, entitled "Advancement of Women".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to approve that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We next turn to paragraph 82, relating to item 169, entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations".

The General Committee decided to defer its recommendation on the allocation of the item.

We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 83 (a), relating to item 170, entitled "Observer status for the International Development Law Institute in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item be allocated to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 83 (b), relating to item 172, entitled "Observer status for the International Hydrographic Organization in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item be allocated to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 83 (c), relating to item 173, entitled "Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item be allocated to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We next turn to the recommendation in paragraph 83 (d), relating to item 174, entitled "International convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item should be allocated to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 83 (e), relating to item 176, entitled "Observer status for Partners in Population and Development in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item be allocated to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee.

I invite members to turn to the list of items recommended by the General Committee for consideration in plenary meeting.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items listed in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee for consideration directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the First Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the First

Committee in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Special Political And Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the Second Committee.

Taking into account the decision just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Second Committee in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Third Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items to the Third Committee as proposed in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Fifth Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items to the Fifth Committee as proposed in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: Lastly, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for the Sixth Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed to the Sixth Committee in paragraph 84 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of the first report of the General Committee. I wish to thank all the members of the Assembly for their cooperation.

Each Main Committee will receive the list of agenda items allocated to it so that it may begin and organize its work in accordance with rule 99 of the rules of procedure.

In addition, kindly again note that the First Committee should complete its work by Friday, 9 November; the Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee by Friday, 16 November; the Sixth Committee by Friday, 23 November; the Third Committee by Wednesday, 28 November; and the Second and the Fifth Committees by Friday, 7 December 2001.

I hope the Main Committees will continue with the effort they demonstrated in the fifty-fifth session in concluding their work on time.

I wish to recall and underline that all meetings must start punctually at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., and I personally intend to ensure that we all keep to our commitment taken today. This undertaking also applies to the Secretariat, which must ensure that all documentation in all languages is available on time so that meetings can proceed without any delay.

I should now like to draw the attention of representatives to a matter concerning the participation of Palestine, in its capacity as observer, in the sessions and work of the General Assembly.

Members will recall resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998 and its annex, as well as a note by the Secretary General contained in document A/52/1002 that outlines the Secretary-General's understanding of the implementation of the modalities annexed to the resolution.

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention in particular to paragraph 6 of the annex to resolution 52/250, which reads as follows:

> "The right to make interventions, with a precursory explanation or the recall of relevant General Assembly resolutions being made only once by the President of the General Assembly at the start of each session of the Assembly".

Accordingly, for the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the observer of Palestine will therefore participate in the work of the General Assembly in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, resolution 43/177 of 15 December 1988 and resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998, with no further need for a precursory explanation prior to any intervention by Palestine in this session.

The meeting rose at noon.

United Nations

A/56/PV.4

General Assembly

Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

4th plenary meeting
Thursday, 20 September 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han .... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 97

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(c) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

The President: The General Assembly will begin the high-level dialogue on the overall theme entitled "Responding to globalization: facilitating the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century", in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2001, and pursuant to resolution 55/193 of 20 December 2000 and to the decision taken at its 1st plenary meeting, on 12 September 2001.

In accordance with resolution 55/193, the high-level dialogue shall consist of plenary meetings, ministerial round-table meetings and informal panels, with the participation of non-governmental actors.

I should now like to recall for members that, at the 3rd plenary meeting of the General Assembly, held yesterday, it was announced that in addition to plenary meetings, two ministerial round tables-cum-informal panels will be held today.

The first ministerial round table-cum-informal panel will be held this morning from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Conference Room 3 and will be on the sub-theme entitled "Enhancing the integration of developing countries in the emerging global information network, facilitating access to information and communication technology for developing countries".

The second ministerial round table-cum-informal panel will be held this afternoon from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m., also in Conference Room 3, and will be on the sub-theme entitled "Promoting the integration of developing countries into the world economy and generating new public and private financing resources to complement development efforts".

Following consultations, I have the pleasure to appoint Mr. Elias Gounaris, Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, as the Chairman of the first ministerial round table-cum-informal panel, and Mr. Eladio Loizaga, Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations, as its Rapporteur.

For the second ministerial round table-cum-informal panel, I have the pleasure to appoint Mr. Dumisani Shadrack Kumalo, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, as its Chairman, and Mr. Ion Botnaru, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations, as its Rapporteur.

By Assembly resolution 55/193, the General Assembly requested the President of the General Assembly to continue preparations for the high-level

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dialogue. In that connection, I should like to propose that the Rapporteurs present a summary of the discussions in their respective ministerial round table-cum-informal panels at the concluding meeting of the high-level dialogue.

Shall I take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

The President: Members will further recall that, pursuant to the same resolution, the final outcome of the high-level dialogue will be a summary by the President, to be presented at the closure of the event.

Statement by the President

The President: I am pleased and honoured to welcome representatives to the second high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership. These high-level dialogue sessions provide an invaluable opportunity for an open and constructive exchange of views on ways of ensuring that globalization becomes a positive force for all of us.

Due to last week's tragic events, major meetings of the General Assembly had to be rescheduled or postponed, including the high-level dialogue. I wish to express my deep appreciation to all delegations for agreeing to hold the high-level dialogue today, notwithstanding this difficult situation. I think this sends a message about the firm determination of Member States that the General Assembly will not be deterred by such criminal actions in its efforts in support of world peace and development.

This is a time to be creative in our thinking, to share new ideas, and to map out the direction we should take for the benefit of developing countries. Without the pressure of having a negotiated outcome, the dialogue format will encourage all participants to explore solutions to the most vexing challenges that the Assembly will be addressing in the months to come.

Under the overarching theme of globalization, two crucial sub-themes are on the table. The first covers two issues of importance: the integration of developing countries into the world economy and generating financial resources. The new millennium is characterized by shrinking distances, instant news and communications, short production cycles and unprecedented wealth creation. On the other hand, globalization is also characterized by growing development gaps, both among and within countries. While the international community has done much to promote the integration of developing countries into the world economy, we need to address legitimate concerns about the marginalization of developing countries which have been unable to enjoy the full benefits of globalization.

The question of financing for development took on new urgency in the follow-up to the series of global conferences and summits convened by the United Nations in the 1990s. Those events set out a multitude of goals and targets and comprehensive action plans at the national, regional and international levels to realize a holistic vision of development. In particular, the Millennium Declaration, adopted last September, has given an unprecedented level of political commitment to these goals. I believe that the Declaration's goal of reducing by half the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 must also be our overriding goal, not only during this two-day dialogue but during the entire fifty-sixth session of the Assembly.

In that regard, I would like to stress the significance of the International Conference on Financing for Development, which will take place in March of next year in Monterrey, Mexico. Many challenging ideas and considerations have already been presented during the preparatory process. I hope that we can build on those in developing our own distinctive contribution to the success of the Monterrey meeting through partnership among relevant stakeholders.

The second sub-theme of this dialogue is closely related to the first one. Globalization has been recognized as being multifaceted in nature, and the current phase of globalization is shaped by the fact that knowledge has become a source of competitive advantage. Information and communication technologies (ICT) have come to play a pivotal role in the emerging global knowledge-based economy. Information and communication technologies can be a powerful tool in the economic and social development of countries, societies and individuals by opening up new avenues for trade, commerce and employment.

Yet the majority of the world's population continues to live in poverty, and many countries have yet to reap the full benefits of the ICT revolution. Closing the digital divide among and within countries is an enormous task and, therefore, cannot be the sole responsibility of one group of stakeholders. Basically, Governments have the primary responsibility for promoting the well-being of their people. However, the public sector alone cannot provide all the answers for the complex problems of globalization. Civil society and the private sector not only have a stake in development, they have the necessary ideas, perseverance and creativity to surmount obstacles and find solutions to the challenges we face.

I am pleased to note that their role has been recognized by the United Nations in setting up an ICT Task Force with multi-stakeholder participation. With regard to the world summits on the information society to be held in 2003 and 2005, it is vitally important that the major stakeholders be involved in addressing a number of issues, including the digital divide, throughout the preparatory process and the final events. I am hopeful that the General Assembly will play a major role in ensuring the success of these seminal events.

In my view, it is crucial for the General Assembly to continue to explore ways of interacting with the multiple stakeholders who are instrumental in turning policy proposals into practical reality. It is encouraging that they have repeatedly shown their willingness to assume their share of responsibility for achieving development targets. This dialogue should therefore strive to be as interactive as possible and to be fully open to the views and suggestions of academia, civil society and the private sector. I look forward to a rich and productive dialogue.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: I am honoured to join the Assembly at the opening of the high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership.

The Assembly's decision to convene this meeting in spite of the tragic events of last week is a clear indication of the importance that the international community attaches to this subject.

This dialogue is meant to advance our understanding of the potential and the potential challenges that globalization represents. It is also meant to illuminate the subject from a different perspective, one that stresses partnership and mutual benefit. It provides an opportunity to review and to make progress in the implementation of the conclusions of the Millennium Assembly, the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and the recent substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council.

In all those gatherings, extreme poverty was identified as one of the most urgent challenges facing the world community at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The paramount task of reducing poverty to alleviate the suffering of so many of the world's people will be rendered even more difficult by the current slowdown of economic growth. A primary objective of this dialogue, therefore, must be to find ways of ensuring that this task is pursued with an even stronger sense of commitment.

One of the first preoccupations of all Governments right now must be to take concerted actions to encourage a revival of global economic growth. When it comes, it is vital that that revival should be sustainable and that growth be spread more equitably than in the past.

Developing countries must be given a fair chance to compete in the world market place. That will happen only when developed countries do more to open their markets and when developing countries improve their capacity to produce and export goods and services at competitive prices. Many of them will need technical assistance to achieve this, but they also need to recognize and to remove the barriers to free exchange and investment that still exist within the developing world.

In this context, it is more important than ever to seize the opportunity offered by the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Qatar in two months' time. This must be the occasion for States to implement fully the commitments they undertook in the Uruguay round and to launch a new round of trade negotiations, which deserves the name "development round". Such a new round should help to restore the momentum of open markets, while giving genuine priority to the concerns and interests of developing countries.

Two subjects, public and private financing resources and information and communications technologies, have been selected for more detailed discussion today. In this forum, the Assembly will be able to hear various ideas that have been put forward for financing development, including those contained in the report of the high-level panel appointed by the Secretary-General, referred to as the Zedillo report. Now is the time for Member States to decide which of these ideas merit further consideration in preparation for the International Conference on Financing for Development, which, as the President has mentioned, will be held next March in Monterrey, Mexico.

Information and communications technologies are a central feature of this era and a driving force in globalization. If developing countries are to compete in the new global market, a big effort is needed to improve their access to this more advanced form of infrastructure. We look especially to the United Nations information and communications technology (ICT) Task Force for recommendations on ways to bridge the global digital divide and foster digital opportunities for all. This dialogue, too, should contribute suggestions for practical and effective policies in this field.

The Assembly's discussions today offer an opportunity to exchange ideas, not only between different States and regions of the world but also, in the round tables and informal panels, between people of different experience and perspectives, since representatives of the private sector and academia will be taking part. The ideas the Assembly generates should be useful to its current session, but also to the wider and longer-term global effort to promote development.

Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I have to start by referring to an absolutely new challenge: the recent event that has left no country or reasoning individual indifferent. Like all civilized humankind, we in Russia have been deeply shocked by the barbaric acts of international terrorism against the American nation. We consider this terrorist act a tragedy that affects everyone and a challenge to the entire international community.

Terrorism knows no national borders and has already acquired a global character. That is why it is necessary to strengthen and enhance the interaction of the international community in combating this common threat of terrorism. International terrorism is not only a political and legal problem but a socio-economic one as well. It represents a significant obstacle to the sustainable development of States.

In addition to the loss of life and property it causes, international terrorism engenders political instability, which deprives States and regions of the opportunity to develop normally and forces Governments to divert enormous human and financial resources to combat this evil and to repair the damage. Terrorism, which goes hand in hand with organized crime, particularly drug-trafficking, jeopardizes the prospects of fulfilment for entire generations and their productive integration into society.

In this context, we believe that the efforts of States to combat terrorism at both the national and international levels should be viewed as part and parcel of common endeavours aimed at achieving sustainable development.

Turning directly to the subject of today's dialogue, I would first like to stress that the full-scale integration of developing countries into the world economy is an indispensable prerequisite to, and an important instrument for, the implementation of a global strategy to combat poverty and ensure sustainable development.

The complicated and alarming situation in many regions of the developing world, most critical in Africa and the least developed countries, combined with the new challenges of globalization, requires resolute and comprehensive measures to be taken on a worldwide scale. This primarily means bridging the economic and technological gap, including the digital divide, between the least developed countries and the rest of the world, stable financing to support growth and development, and ensuring conditions favourable to expanding trade and investments. On the other hand, an uncontrolled, spontaneous integration of countries into the global economy can have negative results. That is why it is so important for the process of globalization to be determined first and foremost by international organizations and States and not only by the private sector represented by transnational corporations.

The main responsibility for their development lies, above all, with the developing countries themselves and much depends on the mobilization of their internal resources and efforts. At the same time, the objective set by the international community to halve poverty by the year 2015 calls for the adequate mobilization of financial resources for development. In this respect, we place our high hopes on the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development to be held next March in Mexico. We expect specific political decisions from the Conference to help reverse the longstanding trend of reducing official development assistance, to increase the flow of resources from the donor community and the private sector and to release additional funds through debt-burden relief and by improving the access of exports from the developing countries to the world markets.

Further implementation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative will play a major role in relieving the external debt of countries whose debt burden remains a most serious obstacle to overcoming their own backwardness. Russia has supported the Initiative and will henceforth respect the multilaterally coordinated obligations to implement its expanded version. As a member of the Paris Club and the G8, Russia has done much towards the implementation of the Initiative. Following the application of the conditions of the Paris Club, the total debt of the heavily indebted poor countries to Russia is expected to drop more than tenfold.

The eradication of poverty and the prevention of marginalization, particularly among the least developed countries, greatly depend on the deeper involvement of developing countries in international trade and the expansion of productive investment into the real sector and infrastructure. We support initiatives to improve the access of the least developed countries to the world markets, including the Generalized System of Preferences, the "Everything but arms" initiative and so forth.

Russia has long given considerable tariff preferences to developing countries. Most products originating from developing countries are imported at a reduced customs rate of 75 per cent of the basic tariff. We believe that such a preferential regime is essential for expanding mutually advantageous trade and economic cooperation and facilitating the resolution of current development problems.

The trade preferences accorded to the least developed countries are of a still larger scale. Nearly all products from these countries are now imported to Russia duty-free. In respect of imports from the least developed countries, neither quantitative restrictions are applied nor may investigations be carried out concerning the introduction of anti-dumping, compensatory or special protective measures. Moreover, we reaffirm our readiness to extend the regime of duty- and quota-free access to cover all goods, except weapons, from the least developed countries. At the same time, additional amendments to the current legislation are being worked out in Russia regulating the issues of granting tariff preferences aimed at the further liberalization of conditions for the access of goods from developing countries to the Russian market.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have considerable potential in terms of providing assistance to developing countries in speeding up their economic growth, enhancing living standard, combating poverty and solving other priorities of development. In the era of globalization, ICTs are one of the most important factors determining the development of the world economy and ensuring sustainable social and economic development.

The information revolution entails not only the enhancement of opportunities, but also evident challenges and risks. That is why the most important task is to make every necessary effort to ensure that information technologies serve the interests of all countries. The international community has special responsibility for turning information technologies into a factor of development, rather than broadening the so-called digital divide between countries and regions. It is also important not to let ICTs turn into a kind of "virtual" barrier obstructing trade and development.

The mobilization of necessary financial and technological resources for the effective implementation of programmes in the field of development on the whole and the introduction and dissemination of ICTs in particular require fruitful cooperation with the private sector. In this context, we attach great importance to partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector, first of all in the framework of the Global Compact proposed by the Secretary-General and other initiatives. In this vein, we support the earliest possible development and coordination on the intergovernmental level of provisions governing the procedures for joint work of the organizations of the United Nations system with private business.

We hope that this dialogue will promote efforts to move towards the effective resolution of the pressing issues of development that will meet the interests of all peoples.

Mr. Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Speaking on behalf of the chairmanship of the Group of 77, I thank the President of the General Assembly and the

Deputy Secretary-General for two interesting and comprehensive statements. The chairmanship of the Group of 77 cannot compete with the brevity of those statements, simply because I have a big family to represent.

This is the second time that the intergovernmental body of the United Nations is engaged in a high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, the overall theme being "Responding to globalization: facilitating the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century". This is indeed a daunting challenge and a very tall order. Our collective enterprise this year takes place under very difficult circumstances, emanating from the horrendous terroristic, inhuman acts perpetrated last week here in the United States. Let me seize the occasion here to extend, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our most profound condolences and sympathy to the Government and people of the United States and to the families and relatives of the victims of these tragic events. If anything, these events make the case for international cooperation and partnership proper all the more imperative and urgent.

It appears that globalization has become part and parcel of our collective life, its impact being felt in different forms, to different degrees and in different arenas of the national life of all societies. Beyond value judgement, it is now an undeniable fact and a still-unfolding process, and it continues to impact the overall situation on a global scale and to affect the development policies of all societies, particularly in the developing world. What is important, though, is that globalization should not be seen as an inevitable blind force beyond the control of human beings or of countries. Rather, globalization is, to a large extent, an interactive process and the result of policy choices and decisions — a process that needs to be harnessed and even directed.

Now that the international community has for the past several years dealt with this seemingly unruly and unbridled process, it should be clear to all of us, both developed and developing countries, that cooperation across the board, particularly between and within North and South, is an absolute necessity. It is needed in order to utilize the tremendous potential of this phenomenon and process for development, especially through the strengthening of interdependence and multilateralism. It goes without saying that the international community in its entirety, and we here at the intergovernmental body of the United Nations, should spare no effort in making optimal use of the ongoing multilateral processes and upcoming major events with the view towards building partnerships in the service of development. In this context, the International Conference on Financing for Development stands out as a unique process and occasion.

Integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century should be seen as a comprehensive process, and it cannot but be based on cooperation and partnership. Trade, investment, private capital flows and debt, international financial cooperation for development, and governance and participation of developing countries in the monetary, financial and trading systems are among some of the major elements for addressing the challenges facing developing countries for integration into the world economy.

Trade is the most important mechanism for almost every developing country for economic integration with other countries and plays an important role in development. Trade is also the major instrument for integration in the international economy. An open, rule-based, transparent, non-discriminatory and predictable multilateral trading system is an essential component for the global economic system and would contribute tremendously to world economic growth and the smooth integration of developing countries into the world economy. Many developing countries have made major progress in liberalizing their trade regimes, which has resulted in the expansion of their trade.

While emphasizing the importance of sequential liberalization, we would also like to stress the necessity of promoting market access for goods and services of interest to developing countries and removing constraints on their exports by our developed partners, which impose costs on us that far outweigh aid flows. Strengthening supply-side capacity in areas such as infrastructure, human development, export expansion and economic diversification are other important components for promoting trade that could lead to expeditious integration into the world economy.

Foreign direct investment and private flows to developing countries — which could bring a range of dynamic benefits, including better access to the markets of countries of origin — could also enhance integration of developing countries into the world economy. The Group of 77 and China believe that the volume of such flows and investments should increase and their distribution among developing countries should become more equitable, while ensuring their profitability to both the investors and host countries. Addressing the volatility of short-term capital flows is also imperative. Dissemination of information on investment opportunities in developing countries and technical and financial assistance for strengthening the institutional infrastructure of those countries could also lead to more financial flows and investment. Other measures such as the extension of fiscal support to outward investors, insurance schemes and market access could also increase opportunities for investment in and financial flows to developing countries. The impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) could be optimized and its potential benefits for development could be brought about through strengthening technological capacities, boosting export competitiveness, generating employment and establishing networking between foreign affiliates and their host economies, especially with small and medium enterprises. This would also contribute to the integration of developing countries into the world economy.

Finding a durable solution for external debt and the debt-servicing problems of developing countries is vital if an environment conducive to integrating them into the world economy is to be created. This can be accomplished through enhancing international cooperation to assist these countries to get away from the rescheduling process and the unsustainable debt burdens, which undermine the domestic resource base of developing countries and deprives them of those resources.

International financial cooperation has a critical role to play in the development process and the integration into the world economy of all developing countries, in particular the least developed countries (LDCs), African countries, Small Island Developing Countries and Land-locked Developing Countries. Official development assistance (ODA), in its various forms, serves as a source of financing of technical assistance, development of human capital, capacity-building to overcome the constraints of remoteness and isolation from the world markets, expansion of infrastructure and productive capacity, diversification of export bases and improvement in an overall environment conducive to a higher level of public and private sector initiatives — all of which are essential components for integration in the global economy. Quite regrettably, as we all know, the volume of ODA and official flows has been decreasing steadily during the past decade, both in real and relative terms. The Group of 77 and China believe that ODA has a key role to play in ensuring that the benefits of globalization would be shared more equitably by the developing countries. The first step should be to halt the declining trend and, of course, to reverse it, while strengthening the requisite political will to increase the level of ODA to reach the agreed target of 0.7 percent of gross national product (GNP) of developed countries. Promoting aid effectiveness and efficiency, as well as harmonization and simplification of operational policies and procedures of international financial flows, is equally important and imperative. Launching a global information and advocacy campaign for raising public awareness in developed countries on the urgency and necessity of increasing ODA should also be encouraged.

The Group of 77 and China believe that existing institutional arrangements and multilateral cooperation in the areas of international monetary, financial and trading systems are lagging far behind the process of economic and financial integration at the global level. Enhancing the coherence of these systems could contribute enormously to the consistency of policy- and decision-making at the macro or global level, including the policy recommendations of the relevant international institutions in areas that could assist developing countries in their endeavours towards a smooth and less volatile integration into the world economy. In the context of promoting increased and more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization, adequate representation and broad and meaningful participation of developing countries in the international economic decision-making and norm-setting processes and global financial governance should be enhanced and ensured. Better representation and participation can bolster the effectiveness and efficiency of the relevant international forums and committees with responsibilities for the governance of the international economy. They will also support the relevant international institutions in their objectives of being fully responsive to the development challenges of developing countries. It could also help developing countries to better understand the implications of various international monetary, financial and trading policies for their development, which could prevent their marginalization and simultaneously help facilitate their effective and meaningful integration into the world economy.

Regional arrangements and cooperation is another area that we believe would help the developing countries in their quest for integration into the global economy. In fact, these arrangements seem to have gained prominence in recent years, perhaps, to some degree, as a result of the disquieting uncertainties in the relationships of global arrangements. These arrangements can undoubtedly assist developing countries to promote their cooperation and coordination in various economic fields, including through the establishment of necessary institutions at the subregional and regional levels. Such arrangements could also serve to improve rules, regulations and norms and standards in the monetary, financial and trade fields. It should be stressed, however, that a conducive global environment is a precondition for the integration of members of regional arrangements into the world economy.

Let me turn now to another important emerging aspect of the world economy, an area where special and immediate action is very much needed to help enable developing countries to benefit from its opportunities and potentials. The revolution in information and communications technology (ICT) has contributed enormously to the creation of the emerging global knowledge-based economy which opens vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development. Integration of the developing countries into this new emerging knowledge-based economy could be associated with ample opportunities for economic growth, such as promotion of electronic commerce, lower transaction costs, dissemination of information on investment opportunities in developing countries and networking with foreign enterprises and their affiliates. The potential opportunities are tremendous. More daunting, however, are the immediate challenges developing countries face, including the widening digital divide, which severely constrains their active and meaningful integration into this new economy and could lead to the crippling of development and further marginalization.

We hardly, if at all, need to engage in any further description of the potential benefits of ICT — or its perils, for that matter. The overall situation, with all its implications, serious and even grave as they are, is quite clear to all of us, including the challenges in the areas of lack of capacity, infrastructure, connectivity and local content. What needs to be done is equally clear: the potentialities of ITC should be utilized to serve the cause of the long-term comprehensive development of the developing countries. Put in very practical terms, the aim should be to assist those countries to catch up with global developments and advances and to integrate into the world economy as effectively — and, of course, as expeditiously — as possible. Utilization of these technologies, which happen to be practically inaccessible to many developing societies, should help those societies make strides in the never-ending quest for reliable sustained economic growth and in the improvement of such critical areas as health and education, as well as in the empowerment of civil society: in a word, in moving towards the ever-elusive strategic objective of poverty alleviation and poverty eradication.

Let me just emphasize one of the areas in which developing countries face particular constraints: the area of infrastructure and capacity. Obviously, the existence and provision of the necessary infrastructure and capacity goes beyond mere access to a computer connected to the Internet. Rather, this relates to fundamental issues and problems, inter alia, the existence and functioning of an educational system with universal coverage, including basic and digital literacy; the existence of well equipped telecommunications systems; technological skills to utilize, support and administer information technologies facilities; making the necessary investment in human resource development; strengthening the institutions and networks for utilizing all aspects of knowledge products; and establishing the capacity for research and development related to indigenous technologies for producing hardware and software products.

Connectivity and endeavours to achieve universal connectivity constitute another major component of any strategy for the dissemination of ICT. Connectivity should be accessible and affordable for all, including through community-based approaches and through the provision of public access points, as well as through a market-based approach and competition. Local content, as another major and prominent element for the utilization of ICT, should be promoted. Generation, development and enhancement of local content through the introduction of local language character sets could assist and justify stronger private investment in information and communication technology products and Internet content, and could create the necessary platform for reaching economies of scale which would make connectivity and access possible and cheaper.

While emphasizing the importance of comprehensive national action for establishing necessary capacities and infrastructure and for encouraging connectivity and the generation and expansion of local content, it is nevertheless necessary — in fact, imperative — to have strong international support for such programmes and actions on the part of international and multilateral institutions, most particularly the United Nations system, and also the World Bank, regional banks and developed partners. While welcoming the establishment of the ICT Task Force as a practical step aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations system in this area, we believe that effective and meaningful collaborative efforts are required to enhance the development impact of ICT. We would also like to underline the importance of the Task Force building upon the expertise that already exists within the United Nations system, including in particular the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

The importance of providing the Task Force with adequate financial resources does not need to be further emphasized. The Task Force should receive every assistance in devising appropriate policies at the global and regional levels to accelerate and promote universal access to knowledge and information and the development of norms and standards on a transparent, meaningful and participatory basis. Some of the major elements of the work of the Task Force that we would like to underline at this stage are: developing projects; devising measures to reduce the cost of access and connectivity in developing countries; innovative action to increase the number of computers and other Internet access devices in developing countries; facilitating the transfer of information and communication technologies to those countries; and supporting research and development on ICTs and their applications in those countries. Of course, most urgent and immediate of all is to have the Task Force start its work.

I close my statement at this point, Mr. President, and wish you and the Bureau every success in steering the work of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. In dealing with the huge, daunting challenge that awaits you, you can rest assured of the full cooperation of the Group of 77 and China. Our mutual cooperation will certainly help the success of the Assembly on this agenda item as well as on other items.

Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

I wish once again to express our horror and distress at the terrorist attacks that struck the United States last week. Again, our condolences go to the people of the United States. I reaffirm the determination of our countries to strengthen the fight against international terrorism. In that connection, Mr. President, I welcome your announcement that the debate on that subject desired by the European Union will begin on Monday, 1 October, in plenary meeting. Heads of State or Government of the European Union will meet tomorrow, Friday, 21 September, at Brussels; the fight against international terrorism will be at the centre of their discussions. Their conclusions will undoubtedly enhance our debate, because we believe that the United Nations must play a central role in meeting this vast new challenge confronting the entire international community.

The member States of the European Union have chosen two closely interrelated sub-themes for this debate, relating to the economic and technological dimensions of globalization. On a general level, first of all, the European Union reiterates the importance it attaches to increased coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, and, of course, to their annual dialogue in the Economic and Social Council.

We must also stress the need for more numerous innovative partnerships, since interdependence exists not only between countries but between all the actors involved. From the outset we would like also to highlight another facet of our approach, namely the particular attention we would like to pay to the least developed of the developing countries.

The first sub-theme that I should like to address relates to promoting the integration of developing countries into the world economy and generating new public and private financing resources to complement development efforts.

We are convinced that globalization is a tremendous multiplier of growth and prosperity; however, inequalities remain. It is obvious that many countries, particularly the poorest, have not yet been able to benefit fully from this potential. Humanizing globalization means, above all, making it inclusive by fully integrating developing countries into the world economy and by generating new flows of financing in their direction. It is, of course, first and foremost up to those countries themselves to create an environment conducive to investment, trade and development in general, but the international community also has an important role to play.

This integration, which begets progress, is vital to the attainment of the international development goals set by the major world conferences. At the Millennium Summit, we renewed our commitment to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory trading and financing system.

At that Summit we also vowed to make every effort to ensure the success of the International Conference on Financing for Development. We are very pleased that the Bretton Woods institutions are involved in the innovative preparatory process leading to the Monterrey Conference.

The Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development will enable us to help make globalization serve sustainable development, through a better integration of its economic, social and environmental dimensions and by generating new momentum in the fight against poverty.

If the developing countries are to benefit fully from the boom in global trade, they must, first of all, be members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and have the means to operate effectively in it and to use all of its instruments. Developing countries must therefore be given help, in the form of technical assistance, in order to strengthen their capacity to participate fully in the WTO and to benefit from it.

The General Assembly has already asked the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to support efforts to promote the effective participation of those countries in multilateral negotiations and a greater diversification of their trade. A special effort must also be made for the least developed countries, both as regards trading preferences — and the European Union has shown the way with its "Everything but arms" initiative — and to help them to participate in the activities of the WTO.

The fourth Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Qatar should also highlight the tangible advantages for developing countries in the framework of the vast arena of work that it will address. Trade must serve the human being and, therefore, sustainable development, paying heed to the needs of future generations by taking account of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of progress.

Last spring in Brussels, at the third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, we made a number of commitments to those countries. It is essential to implement effectively those commitments and to agree promptly on the means to follow them up. This means negotiating substantial reductions in the high tariffs and subsidies affecting trade, particularly in the sectors which are of most importance to the least developed countries. It also means negotiating rules which take account of their development needs and of their implementing capability.

Confidence levels are an important determining factor in financial flows — whether it be whether private finance, in the form of direct and portfolio investment, or public finance, in the form of concessional loans. Confidence is built on patient and careful work. National Governments, of course, bear the primary responsibility in this respect, but the international community also has a crucial role to play.

For example, a clear consensus needs to be reached, in consultation with civil society, on factors such as, inter alia, legal protection and non-discrimination, which are needed if foreign direct investment is to flourish in a country. This would make it possible to develop new flows of investment into countries which have until now been excluded from them.

Corruption is a scourge which must be combated first at the national level, but it is clear that it also, and perhaps increasingly, has international ramifications. International legal instruments should be adopted not only to fight corruption, but also to facilitate the repatriation of the proceeds of unlawful operations transferred abroad. Some progress was made in 1997, with the adoption of the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions.

While it is essential to attract private capital to all developing countries, that does not mean, of course, giving a free hand to the private sector, particularly in fragile economies. Corporate governance must be developed, particularly through more detailed and more widely disseminated international accounting standards and competition law. The European Union also favours the use of various instruments to encourage socially responsible investment, such as the OECD guidelines on this subject.

To consolidate confidence, developing countries must also be returned to solvency. The problem of debt requires a range of solutions, which are, of course, primarily a matter for the developing countries themselves; however, industrialized countries must also undertake concerted action.

The potential of partnerships is still greatly underexploited. Innovative synergies can develop through cooperation among ministries, national and local authorities, public bodies, banks, companies and non-governmental organizations. Official development assistance could link up with other forms of finance. The interaction between international, national, regional and local levels should be intensified. International financial institutions could engage in more diverse means of cooperation. There is also, of course, the possibility of public-private partnerships, particularly with respect to financing basic infrastructure and taking advantage of the catalytic effect of official development assistance. Innovative forms of guarantees could be developed to allow this option to provide more flows of finance.

Finally, the European Union cannot but reaffirm its commitment to reaching the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance as soon as possible. Official development assistance remains a significant source of development finance for a number of countries. It must be targeted at specific ends where it backs up action by the private sector and local public bodies, such as implementing international development objectives agreed upon at the major world conferences and the reduction of poverty.

I would now like to address the second sub-theme that we have chosen, which concerns how to enhance the integration of developing countries in the emerging global information network, facilitating their access to information and communications technologies (ICTs).

The revolution in information technology and telematics is both a cause and a component of the phenomenon of globalization. The digital divide is an important aspect of the technological dimension of development, a dimension which, though often neglected, is essential. It is a very complex dimension, too, inextricably linked as it is with other questions such as the development of an educational system which includes training in the new technologies, for women as well as men; the legal framework; economic freedom; infrastructure; and the respect for fundamental freedoms, particularly the freedom of expression.

The European Union awaits with interest the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report on the impact on development of the increased integration between trade, the financial sector, knowledge, technology and investment.

To bridge the digital divide, we must work in a different way. It is vital that the telecommunications markets be integrated and liberalized without delay, so as to lower the cost of access to the internet. Given the transnational nature of the worldwide web, it is essential that Governments cooperate on issues such as copyright, computer security, electronic trading standards, legal and tax questions and combating computer crime.

The private sector must be involved much more, by multiplying the forms of partnership, if only because Governments have only limited expertise in information and communication technologies and are not always able to develop adequate national strategies. The ICT Task Force is an excellent example of a promising partnership between the United Nations and the private sector, as is the Digital Opportunities Task Force — the DOT Force — launched by the G8. At local, national and international levels, public-private partnerships often appear to be an ideal means of pooling resources and knowledge in the common interest. We also welcome the fact that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has set about facilitating the search for partners for developing countries in the fields of biotechnology and ecotechnology.

We must not only launch technological projects; we should also integrate the technological dimension in development programmes. United Nations funds and programmes, and active players in development aid in general, should therefore also take account of all the lessons of the information revolution.

Information technologies are an ideal tool of transparency and governance. One of a number of ways of bridging the digital divide is therefore to focus on the promotion of "e-government", in other words, the integrated use of telematics in the administration of public affairs, which will undoubtedly act as a catalyst on society as a whole. E-government makes it possible to reduce the costs of communicating and distributing information, reducing outlay by the State, businesses and citizens. It makes it possible to reduce corruption, open up isolated communities and create new mechanisms for participation and involvement in civil society. At the Lisbon Summit, Europe decided to go down this road in the "e-Europe" project. On 29 and 30 November, the presidency of the European Union and the European Commission are holding a European conference on this subject in Brussels.

The multiplication of community access points to the Internet — telecentres — is a corollary of a successful e-government strategy. The private sector will be the main provider, but that does not in any way prevent public bodies from also taking an active role.

We must also exploit the potential of tools which are still revolutionary, such as telemedicine and teaching over the internet. A good opportunity to address these subjects will be provided by the next substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, where the high-level debate will be devoted to enhancing human resources, particularly in the fields of education and health.

The European Union is convinced that we can and must humanize globalization in order to put it to the service of all. I have addressed just a few aspects of an infinitely greater issue in order to pinpoint some concrete examples which demand action. The European Union hopes that this dialogue will make it possible, as in the past, to highlight new trends and new areas to be worked on and thus contribute to forthcoming debates, particularly the Conference on Financing for Development.

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) *(spoke in Arabic)*: It gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and on presiding at the high-level dialogue on globalization. Your election reflects the appreciation of the international community of you and of the positive role being played by your friendly country in the international arena. I would like also to express gratitude to your predecessor, Harri Holkeri, for his distinguished efforts in conducting the preceding session.

Humanity has been shocked by the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. These actions are not in line with religion or divine revelation. On behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and on my own behalf, I would like to express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of the United States, to the delegation of the United States to the United Nations and to the victims' families.

The twentieth century was one of bloody wars and conflicts, as well as of humanitarian disasters unprecedented in human history. However, it was also a century of great discoveries and advances in science and technology, and of great achievements in the cultural and economic fields. With the demise of the cold war, and before the end of the last century, ideological divisions ended. Humanity began to hope again to achieve its legitimate aspirations to realize peace, security and well-being. Yet the facts in the international arena indicate an apparent and increasing division between rich States that have become richer and poor States that have become poorer, and between a handful of States which enjoy the fruits of technological advancement and the majority of the population which cannot absorb and benefit from technology.

Our world today faces great challenges that hinder the development of the majority of States that live in poverty and deprivation. A great many people continue to live in poverty, rampant ignorance, disease and epidemics, in addition to conflicts and wars and environmental risks such as desertification and pollution. The international community should bear its responsibility and pool its efforts to put an end to all these challenges through cooperation and partnership in decision-making and sharing of responsibilities.

While globalization as a concept was used in the 1980s, it is in fact an ancient expression. It has always been linked to empires whose influence extended throughout the world. It is not a new phenomenon; it has been developed over the years through travel, trade, immigration and the dissemination of culture, knowledge and concepts. It has taken many turns. Although the concept of globalization was launched from the West at the end of the first millennium, it originally emerged in the East, in line with the historical and cultural interaction between all the regions of the world.

Globalization is a reality of our century. It is irrevocable and is characterized by increasing interdependence between States, economies and populations as a result of great scientific and technological achievements that have reduced distances, changed communications and spread information among States. The amazing technological achievements of globalization represent a huge asset for progress, for combating poverty and promoting well-being. The prominent economic characteristics of the twenty-first century are embodied in globalization, in free trade, in allowing free transfer of capital and in great progress in various fields of technology. That does not mean that developing countries, which are the majority of the international community, should accept that its fruits and dividends be restricted to industrially and technologically developed countries, while the poor countries continue to be mired in poverty, ignorance and underdevelopment.

The realization of potential, thanks to globalization, continues to be elusive because it takes place in disorderly economic markets. Instead of bringing about the benefits to which we aspire and spreading them in an increasingly intertwined world, globalization has widened the differences and the gap between the poor and the rich. It is obvious that the opportunities it provides are not evenly distributed in the hallowed market competition and the monopolized decision-making by financial power centres. The freedom of trade and the removal of barriers called for by globalization carry as many risks as opportunities — opportunities that do not guarantee success — and they automatically require appropriate political practices and a suitable investment environment.

If globalization allows the expansion of world trade — which in turn leads to an increase in productivity and exports along with the expansion of joint investments — and the facilitation of the transfer of technology as a result of the linkage and cooperation between transnational corporations and national corporations, and if it is reflected in an increase in productivity, distribution, marketing, research and development across national borders, then we must consider at the same time an expected slowdown in the production of national goods in developing countries because of the competition from imported goods, whether in national or international markets. This is because products of industrialized countries are more advanced technologically, cheaper and of higher quality, and because the rules of the market and competition require higher wages and bringing in more advanced technology from developed countries. Hence the frustration, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, the accumulation of legendary riches by the wealthy countries and the increasing poverty of the poor. The gap between States with regard to patterns of development has widened, leading to calls for the humanization of globalization and for recognition that people's needs must be considered and that globalization must be given an ethical dimension.

The widening gap between States now requires fair trade as much as free trade. The international community is calling for constructive partnership to achieve balanced and sustainable development for all States, without exclusion or marginalization. Doubts arise with regard to the justice of the multilateral trade system because of difficulties in international trade relations. The developing countries have not had a fair share from the multilateral trade system.

There are no clear or defined rules on admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO), no terms or provisions. There is dire need to make the WTO truly global in nature. The admission of developing countries should be facilitated in order to allow them to be part of this organization. In their current development circumstances they should not be required to do more than the current WTO member States.

More than ever, globalization requires promotion of cooperation and solidarity in order to achieve balanced and harmonious results. In our world today — a world in which distances are reduced, a world which has become a global village because of scientific and technological advances — States should work together to reduce the obvious shortcomings in international relations caused by the widening gap between developed and developing countries.

Globalization, which required adjustment on the part of many States, is itself required to adjust its functions to meet people's needs and to introduce changes and amendments to its ways. For globalization to benefit mankind, it must be coupled with a new world order that is fair and sustainable and that allows developing countries to participate in decision-making. Blaming developing countries and criticizing their Governments, and providing them insufficient financial assistance and little advanced technology along with a great deal of advice, will not achieve their targets and goals. To consider the problems of developing countries as temporary relief emergencies which require only charitable action is not an effective remedy. Charitable action itself is no longer capable of providing solutions for spiralling poverty and want in developing countries.

The available data and trends in the global economy indicate that there is a dire need to find new and innovative resources to finance sustainable development in developing countries, such as through reducing world military expenditures. Otherwise, a great many of the world's population will continue to live in dire and abject poverty and underdevelopment, with dangerous consequences that might push the world into a vortex of disturbances and conflicts that will adversely affect international peace and security. This will have serious consequences for international peace and security.

There is also a need for international cooperation to reduce global economic disparities and to lessen the adverse effects of the flow of capital earmarked for speculation. A multilateral management system should be activated. Cooperation with regard to the measures taken by the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO needs to be enhanced.

The digital revolution is a clear source of immense benefits for humankind. However, digital technology has a dangerous tendency to become a new barrier and a great force for exclusion and manipulation. Reducing the digital divide will not be achieved without technological justice that gives to one and all the right to possess information technology and other advanced technologies so that humanity can live in comfort and dignity.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has contributed to the promotion of development in developing States, especially the least developed countries. It has implemented a great many development programmes and has provided generous donations to such countries in order to combat poverty and underdevelopment and to achieve development and stability.

It goes without saying that there is neither stability nor security without sustainable and comprehensive development. This will not be achieved without quick, steady, comprehensive and multilateral steps to accelerate development and the fight against poverty, disease and ignorance. The past century showed that the dividends of a free market and advanced technology must be distributed fairly, both nationally and internationally.

In the first year of the twenty-first century we are imbued with the hope for a new international humanistic order based on new partnership between developing and developed countries, an order based on cooperation, equality, shared responsibilities, justice and mutual benefits. We look forward to international relations that prevent children from dying from hunger or being deprived of education and that protect people from diseases and epidemics, an order that upholds human dignity and protects the life future of all human beings.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Norman Nicholson, Director of the Office of Development Partnership in the Bureau for Policy and Programme Coordination in the Agency for International Development of the United States of America.

Mr. Nicholson (United States): I would like to start by saluting the efforts of all parties engaged in the realization of this important high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership. I would like to thank the United Nations organizations, the donors, the various Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private foundations and individuals who will be participating in this dialogue.

From the very inception of its foreign assistance programme, over fifty years ago, the United States has committed itself to the integration of weakened economies into a stable and prosperous global economy, cooperating through a system of rule-based institutions. We recognized that the poorest countries and those emerging from conflict or disaster often find the challenge of change and recovery beyond their resources or institutional capacity. These countries can face grave economic, social, and political deterioration, but they need not face it alone.

In 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall argued that the conscience of humanity demanded a response to these conditions. He also recognized that our security and that of other nations was affected by the possibility of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people afflicted by conflict and despair. In words that are all too poignant today, he urged that our policies should be directed "not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos". He argued that the remedy for chaos lies in breaking the vicious circle and building the confidence of the people in the economic future of their own countries and confidence in a world economy that permits the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. Within such a world environment, a people committed to advancing human dignity and opportunity within a context of wise policies and free dialogue can find many partners.

We are assembled here for a dialogue on how to improve the condition of mankind through partnerships directed toward our common goals of reducing poverty, enhancing cooperation and providing dignity and opportunity to all. The events of 11 September constitute a fundamental rejection of the very principles of dialogue and of partnership and the fundamental unity and dignity of the human condition. This meeting could not be more timely.

Today in the twenty-first century we need to renew our spirit of common effort. Developing and developed nations, Governments and NGOs, public and private enterprise — we all need a jointly conceived strategy that, drawing on our respective strengths without masking our weaknesses, holds us all accountable in our unified fight against hunger, disease, illiteracy, injustice and conflict.

The United States will renew its commitment to global economic growth through support for a rule-based international trading system, for assistance to poorer countries to advance policy and institutional reform, for enhanced agricultural development and for investment in human capital and in trade-capacity building.

We shall contribute to this joint effort by fighting infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and by advocating women's health, child survival, better nutrition, public health programmes and improved water and sanitation.

We will work with you to reduce the effects of chaos through new initiatives in conflict prevention and conflict resolution, as well as continued efforts to expand democracy and good governance.

We live in a post-cold-war world that is marked by increasingly accelerated globalization, which, in addition to affording smaller economies the benefits of a global trading system, is opening an unprecedented global community of ideas, technology, global public goods and society-to-society linkages.

This "new world" has also transformed our understanding of the development process. The impact of capital flows, once viewed as the driving force of development by virtue of volume alone, is now understood to depend on the efficiency with which those resources are used. This efficiency in turn depends on better ideas — ideas about policy environments, efficient institutional arrangements for ordering economic activity, productive technology and about improving the productivity of people. Ideas combined with capital are what drive development, and these ideas may flow through business linkages, the advocacy of our NGOs and the internet as much as through official assistance.

We also witness today profound changes in the sources of capital flows and other resources. Although the United States is one of the largest donors in the health sector, nonofficial assistance from the United States already overshadows our official development assistance in this sector. In 1999, for example, net total resource flows from the United States alone to developing countries and multilateral development agencies exceeded $50 billion. Of this total, $36 billion came from non-official sources.

There has also been a dramatic increase in the diversity of potential partners: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private foundations, colleges and universities, private enterprises and even communities. Official development assistance (ODA) is still important, but it needs to leverage these other sources of assistance, and development agencies in developing countries need to find new ways to encourage and organize our relationship with these diverse partners.

The strength of the partnership approach lies in its ability to remain flexible, linking, as appropriate, Governments, businesses, NGOs, private voluntary organizations, foundations, universities and other organizations in diverse ways. These organizations have different capacities, different resources, different goals and aspirations, different development perspectives and different incentive structures. Partnerships that combine the appropriate strengths of these divergent organizations into fruitful and innovative mosaics can achieve results that far surpass the sum of the parts while minimizing our costs.

For greater aid effectiveness, the development efforts of the United States will be increasingly implemented through what we call global development alliances. This is a new financing model for the twenty-first century. The global development alliance is based on a clear recognition of the significant changes that we have witnessed in the environment of development assistance.

The global development alliance will build on our development assistance organizations' considerable experience in dealing with the private sector as a partner in various sectors. An example of such a partnership is the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), a partnership between the Gates Foundation, which provided financing of $750 million, the United States Agency for International Development, international institutions including the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the World Health Organization, the pharmaceutical industry and Governments both of the North and of the South. Another example is the Global Alliance to Improve Nutrition. This is a public/private alliance to improve health through the elimination of vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and the partners include bilateral donors, foundations, multilateral agencies and the private sector.

By taking advantage of the areas of congruence between United States assistance and the private sector, our global development alliance approach will serve as a catalyst that allows the leveraging of our ODA resources to mobilize the ideas, efforts and significant assets of the public sector, corporate America and non-governmental organizations, thereby dramatically increasing total resource flows to developing countries. Donors and development partners at all levels play a critical role in our unified fight against poverty, and in the mobilization of additional resources towards this end.

The ultimate responsibility for development lies with the countries themselves. Development is a hand up, not a handout, not a crutch. We can be supportive, but it is up to the developing countries themselves to put into place the economic policies and the governance structures that mobilize internal and external resources and maintain peace and stability. It is equally important that they maintain societies open to ideas and provide legal and political environments that empower these various potential partnerships.

The growing, necessary and appropriate emphasis upon the total resource flows to developing countries should not — I repeat, should not — be construed as a de-emphasis on the importance of official development assistance to the development enterprise. In addition to the very critical leverage role that official development assistance has and shall continue to play, it is important in its own right, particularly for the poorest countries, which rely heavily on it. However, given the recent, unprecedented growth in private flows to developing countries, the many development challenges around the world that remain to be addressed, and the failure of ODA successfully to address many of these problems, particularly in the heavily ODA-dependent countries, we believe that the development community must look beyond official flows to the broader potential of close collaboration with a very dynamic and varied group of non-official partners.

Let me close by reiterating the unambiguous commitment of the United States to this development partnership. The challenges we face are enormous, but our resolve to make a real difference is unwavering.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Once again we are gathered to consider how to deal with the question of facilitating the integration of developing countries into the world economy. It is a theme that is increasingly prominent on the agenda of many of our meetings, and I am sure that it will be high on the agenda of forthcoming meetings such as the Financing for Development meeting in Mexico and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa, both scheduled for 2002. The challenge we are discussing today on how to bring developing countries into the world economy is of central importance to the global community. If we do not successfully address this question, we are creating immense problems for ourselves in the future, problems that will affect global security and become more difficult to solve as the gap between rich and poor grows wider.

We have made real progress in recent years in our understanding of how globalization works. We have seen that it is a complex phenomenon, and that in many ways it is unstoppable. We have also come to appreciate that there are many features of globalization that we would not wish to see ended. The explosion of advances in science and technology, for example, will surely benefit humankind, as we not only communicate more quickly and effectively with each other, but we also see the real prospect of progress in combating the diseases that are a scourge of our planet.

Other features of globalization, such as the massive increase in global trade, also have potential for benefit, provided the opportunities are distributed equally.

What we have also come to appreciate, however, is that the global playing field is very uneven. This has made it difficult for many developing countries to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization. For many of the least developed countries, it is not a question of difficulty, but rather one of impossibility.

The Millennium Summit acknowledged the enormity of the task and identified the prerequisites for creating conditions where sustainable development is possible, with achievable targets in health and education.

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative on debt relief has made progress in lifting the debt burden for many of the world's poorest countries. Similarly, the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in Brussels earlier this year acknowledged the importance of drastic interventions to assist the least developed countries in their quest for economic growth. Free market access for products from the least developed countries in everything but arms is progress in this regard.

Yet the vast majority of the world's poor people do not live in the least developed countries. They live in developing countries that are not the beneficiaries of these recent decisions. It is they that we also need to focus on, now that we are beginning to make progress in addressing the problems of the least developed countries.

In Africa, we have given serious thought to the fundamental questions underlying the problem of the huge disparities in development between the North and the South. We have come to realize that, although there are important steps that we can look to the developed world to take, there is much that we as developing countries can also do to help ourselves.

In the New African Initiative we have identified the key preconditions for sustainable development that we recognize as vital for our own future. Those include the peaceful resolution of conflict on our continent, the promotion of democratic values and sound, transparent governance. Equally important, though, is the partnership we seek with the developed world, a partnership that will ensure that our efforts are sustained by appropriate support measures. The recent engagement of the countries of the South with the G-8 in Genoa resulted in an undertaking on the part of the G-8 to look seriously at the New African Initiative and come up with a plan of action for tackling the issues we are raising. This is welcome progress, and we look forward to further engagement.

In the area of trade we look for better opportunities for developing countries to gain access to markets. We welcome greater liberalization of the global marketplace and the principle of a rules-based system. But that process must be equitable and must offer developing countries opportunities in sectors and products where they have a competitive advantage. We cannot support a dispensation that merely seeks to entrench the existing inequalities while offering greater benefits in areas where developing countries cannot compete. We will have a historic opportunity, at Doha in two months' time, to make the world trading system more global.

Increased trade opportunities imply increased investments. This is another area where we are confident we can change the historical pattern of capital flows, which are currently mainly between developed countries. We believe that, with the support of the North and with the determination of the South to be on the path of sustainable development, we can create conditions conducive to greater investment in our own economies. Greater investment will lead to economic growth, greater production and larger markets, which will benefit everyone.

We also need to look at the global financial architecture and the issue of global governance. We need to make sure that the global financial institutions serve the needs of all their members and take more significant steps to correct historical imbalances.

We are not going to reach any of the targets of the Millennium Declaration unless we agree to tackle these fundamental questions facing the developing world.

The huge groundswell of global public opinion is in our favour, and we have a responsibility to see that we are doing everything in our own power to bring about conditions that are conducive to benefiting from globalization. In the partnership between the developed and developing countries, we are confident that we can succeed. Let us continue to work together in seeking to achieve our development targets.

Mr. Sun Joun-Yung (Republic of Korea): I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am confident that, under your able leadership, this dialogue will produce a fruitful outcome.

At the outset, on behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Korea, I offer my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the innocent victims who perished in last week's terrorist attacks. I condemn those heinous acts of terrorism. We will join in the international community's efforts to prevent and suppress all forms of terrorism.

As the process of globalization intensifies, the world is experiencing fundamental changes that strengthen interdependence and require partnership among various stakeholders. Globalization is no longer a matter of choice, but a reality we must face. This trend towards globalization has had far-reaching implications for the development process. It is true that many developing countries have successfully reaped the benefits of globalization through freer markets, technological advances and good governance. However, many other developing countries — lacking the capacity to tap into the benefits of globalization — have become marginalized. Given the structure and financial difficulties of most developing countries, development disparities and the digital gap will be further aggravated unless the international community takes concerted action through genuine partnership.

At the Millennium Summit, held last September, world leaders expressed concern over the obstacles to resource mobilization that developing countries face, and resolved to create an environment that is conducive to development and poverty eradication. In that connection, a number of innovative initiatives to mobilize financial resources and help developing countries become integrated into the world economy have been presented in many intergovernmental forums. Among others, I attach particular importance to the International Conference on Financing for Development, which is to be held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March of next year.

With the process of liberalization, empowered actors rather than Governments have become increasingly influential in policy-making. I firmly believe that the success of the Conference will depend largely on the appropriate input of stakeholders from civil society and the private sector, as well as from key institutional stakeholders such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO). In my view, it is also vital that a firm commitment be made at the national and international levels to enhance cooperation and policy coherence among stakeholders. It is encouraging to note that many developing countries are making efforts to improve domestic governance in order to promote an enabling environment conducive to mobilizing resources and attracting investment. Donors and the international community should work together to support such efforts by developing countries.

Turning to the subject of a knowledge-based society facilitated by the revolution in information and communication technologies (ICT), nobody would challenge the idea that ICT has a tremendous potential to contribute to economic growth and poverty eradication in developing countries. At the same time, the digital revolution has presented us with enormous challenges in all areas. Most importantly, we should bear in mind the mounting concerns over the digital divide in the connectivity capacity and content of ICT. The growing digital divide could undermine the development potential of developing countries.

Confronted with those challenges, old policies for developing human resources and institutional capacity need to be adapted. In the public sector rules and regulations should be devised to provide an environment that will attract investment for the promotion of infrastructure development and local content. Furthermore, we have to cope with ever-diversifying cyber-crimes and associated illegal activities facilitated by the use of ICT. Considering the growing importance of the private sector's role, it is vital to forge enhanced partnerships between the public and private sectors.

In this regard, I wholeheartedly welcome the establishment of an ICT task force and expect that meaningful progress will come out of its activities. I also welcome the decision by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to hold a world summit on the information society and hope that such an event will more comprehensively address complex issues relating to ICT.

I believe that the United Nations can play a unique role in promoting public awareness of the wider applications of ICT for development and poverty eradication in developing countries. Given the diverse conditions and policy objectives, the United Nations system should strive for greater coherence and consistency in its activities in the field of ICT. Having said this, I hope that the General Assembly will play a proactive role in contributing to the successful preparation of the World Summit on the Information Society.

Before concluding, I wish to stress that, since the 1990s, the Republic of Korea has been successfully transforming its economy from a manufacturing-oriented to an information- and knowledge-based economy. This paradigm shift has presented us with new opportunities, as well as challenges for the revitalization of our economy. I am confident that the new paradigm will serve as a new development strategy for developing countries.

I hope that this high-level dialogue will provide an important platform to support the growth of developing countries and to facilitate their integration into the global economy.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Before participating in this important debate on economic cooperation, the Moroccan delegation would like to state that in the tragic circumstances, which affect the host city of New York and the United States of America, we Moroccans, as does the entire international community, wholeheartedly express our condolences to the families of the innocent victims of terrorism.

In choosing the theme of the integration of developing countries into the global economy in the twenty-first century for the second high-level debate on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, the General Assembly consolidates the international consensus that emerged from the Millennium Summit regarding the need to fight poverty and to promote sustainable development on a global scale.

The heads of State and Government that took part in that exceptional event unanimously agreed that there is a need to rethink international cooperation in the new context of globalization.

Globalization is an essential and unavoidable fact at the start of the new millennium but it must be accompanied by many corrective measures to transform it into a veritable force for prosperity that benefits all members of the international community.

In order to do this, special priority must be given to the question of development financing and to developing countries' access to information technologies in order to narrow the chasm that separates the developing countries from the developed countries in this domain. This chasm has only grown wider during these last few years.

For more than a decade, developing countries have unceasingly called for an international conference on development financing that could mobilize energy and resources to respond to the financing needs and to the expectations of hundreds of millions of human beings living in poverty. The resources of financial development that have been made available have so far turned out, unfortunately, to be insufficient for dealing with global demographic growth and, especially, for creating sustainable development for all humankind.

The process of preparation for the International Conference on Development Financing, to be held in Mexico in the spring of 2002, and the reports of the Secretary-General on this subject underline the need for international action to guarantee economic and social stability in all countries and to contain the threat of recurring crises that could spread across the entire globe precisely because of the globalization of the economy and of markets.

The Millennium Declaration set the tone. The speeches could not have been clearer about the urgency of adopting a strategy to mobilize resources and to coordinate efforts for financing the development process in developing countries. Our most fervent wish is that the upcoming conference on the financing of development in Mexico be a decisive turning point at which all countries, at all levels, undertake this route of investment, and that conference's outcome be followed by concrete consequences and action on investment.

The whole world is convinced that priority should be given to mobilizing the national resources of developing countries to assure economic growth and social development. It is up to the countries themselves to see to the adoption of healthy macroeconomic policies, to ensure the adoption of effective and targeted social expenditures and the correct management of public monies, and to ensure the creation of a climate favourable to both domestic and foreign private investment.

However, the commendable efforts of developing countries in this area must be supported by the international community, including through providing access to markets, granting special and differentiated treatment, increasing public assistance for development, and reducing the debt burden.

Other mechanisms and measures on the international level are essential for assuring coherence among the economic, financial and environmental policies. The reform of the international financial architecture is indispensable for creating a climate of economic predictability and stability that will enhance the development and growth strategies in all our countries.

The dazzling progress that we have seen in information and communication technologies can contribute significantly to development in our countries, as they give rapid and affordable access to all fields of human activity, especially scientific research. However, the benefits that the developing countries can draw from such technologies are still encountering significant obstacles in the areas of finance, research and protection of intellectual property rights.

As the President of the General Assembly rightly emphasized in his statement at the opening of the fifty-sixth session, these technologies help to stimulate economic growth, but can also constitute a digital divide that widens the technological gap between advanced and developing countries. Nevertheless, with the implementation of adequate policies at the national and international levels, technological progress will certainly help to generate a cycle of progress and emancipation for marginalized populations and societies throughout the world. That is why my country places high hopes in the forthcoming initiative of the presidency along those lines.

National policies can also be decisive in promoting innovation, developing skills and improving the access of all social strata to information technologies. Such policies will remain inadequate, however, if they are not accompanied by international action to establish more equitable rules and to make these technologies available to less developed countries to support their fight against poverty, illiteracy and other socio-economic handicaps.

In this perspective, a fair and equitable use of intellectual and industrial property rights is absolutely necessary. Appropriate agreements and mechanisms can be established by public authorities and the private sector to ensure the development of information and communication technologies in the developing countries. It would therefore be appropriate to reactivate and adjust the multilateral conventions and agreements on the transfer of technologies and the protection of intellectual property rights in order to allow our countries to benefit from these technologies on preferential and concessional terms.

In this spirit, a global plan needs to be drawn up, incorporating information and communication technologies into all development programmes based on innovative and daring measures. It is true that, without innovative public and private action, new technologies, rather than being instruments of progress, could prove instead to be means of exclusion and marginalization.

I will conclude on a note of optimism. We hope that an initiative to allow the developing countries to benefit further from these new technologies will be adopted as soon as possible.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks you, Sir, for presiding over today's meeting.

The Chinese Government wishes to express its shock and dismay at the terrorist incident that took place in the United States. We convey our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the deceased and the injured. The Chinese Government has always been resolute in opposing any kind of terrorist act. Terrorism is a new challenge to mankind in the twenty-first century. In response, we must strengthen international cooperation. The United Nations should play its due role.

Globalization has promoted the development of the world economy, but has also caused imbalances in it. Developing countries, which account for the majority of the world population, have not been able to participate fully in global economic activities. While having benefited much less from globalization than the developed countries, developing countries are bearing the brunt of globalization's negative impact. Many have even been further marginalized.

The international community must face the serious question of how to facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century. The efforts of developing countries on their own are indispensable, but the influence of the international environment should not be underestimated. In this regard, global governance is critical. The current international financial and trade systems represent mostly the interests of the rich countries. The poor countries have little say in the decision-making processes and their interests are often neglected. If this kind of inequality in global governance goes unchecked, the polarization caused by globalization will become even worse, rather than be mitigated.

In our view, developed countries, the heavyweight players in the global economy, should take into consideration the long-term objectives of global prosperity as well as their own long-term interests, correct the inequalities in global governance, heed the voice of developing countries and support their full participation in the formulation of international rules so that their interests in the international economic system can be adequately represented.

Providing sufficient funding for the development of developing countries is a major means by which to facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy. In this regard, the International Conference on Financing for Development has important tasks to fulfil.

Official development assistance has long been a major source of funding to help developing countries, especially those that do not easily attract private capital flows, achieve sustainable development. Regrettably, however, for many years, the overall level of official development assistance has been continuously declining and more and more conditions and requirements have been attached to it. We hope that the developed countries can reach their goal of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product devoted to official development assistance as soon as possible. At the same time, the conditions they attach to official development assistance should conform to realities in the recipient countries and relevant procedures should be streamlined to lessen burdens on the recipients and to enable official development assistance to achieve the best results.

Large volumes of private capital are flowing internationally in the form of foreign direct investment. If these funds are well used, they can play an important part in enhancing the economic development of developing countries. Developing countries should carry out the necessary reforms to attract more private capital. The international community, the developed countries in particular, should take the necessary measures to channel more private capital into developing countries. With the persistence of globalization, the volume and pace of the flow of international capital are accelerating and in turn facilitating the process of globalization. However, owing to the imperfections in the international financial system and financial supervision capacity, the negative impact of financial globalization on developing countries has become salient, bringing about huge pressures on their financial markets and even giving rise to serious economic and political crises. We hope that in the discussions of relevant reforms of the international financial system, great importance can be given to the prevention of financial risks and stabilization of the financial order in developing countries.

Trade is an important channel for mobilizing financial resources. At present, products from developing countries continue to face significant barriers in the markets of developed countries. Some of their products with competitive advantages are exactly the ones that meet with heavy protection in developed countries. This has seriously obstructed the efforts of developing countries to mobilize necessary development resources through trade. The international community, especially developed countries, should take concrete action to address the issue of opening markets to products of developing countries.

Information and communications technologies (ICTs) can greatly facilitate economic and social development in developing countries. However, without effective measures, the digital divide, which has already drawn people's attention, may become even bigger and further widen the gap between developing and developed countries. The international community should give assistance to developing countries, including providing them with financial resources, transferring relevant technology on preferential and concessional terms and helping them build up their infrastructural facilities and capacities and enhance their capacity to use ICT.

Countries should formulate their own ICT development strategies suitable to their respective national conditions. At the same time, we should be aware that the development of ICT is not an isolated issue. It should work hand in hand with the development of human resources and infrastructural facilities. The United Nations should play an important role in helping developing countries to integrate themselves into the world economy using ICT. We hope that the United Nations ICT Task Force will make contributions in this regard.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the development of ICT and international cooperation in this regard. In the first half of this year, the Chinese Government, in collaboration with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), conducted three important conferences related to ICT in China, with the purpose of assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition to improve their capacities, so as to take advantage of ICT and integrate themselves into the global knowledge-based economy. Relevant conclusions and recommendations have been distributed as a United Nations official document (A/56/211), and we hope that they will provide a useful input into our deliberations in this area.

Mr. Niculescu (Romania) (*spoke in English*): Allow me at the outset to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that under your able leadership, this new United Nations General Assembly session and the high-level dialogue meeting will be crowned with success. You have all our support in this endeavour.

After a slight postponement because of the tragic events in New York and Washington — and I would like to reiterate our deep sense of sympathy and solidarity with the American Government and people — the convening of this dialogue underlines a reality: the international community cannot afford to ignore the formidable challenges and implications of the revolution in information and communications technologies (ICTs) and its huge economic and social impact. The main enemy remains marginalization, a problem facing developing countries and countries in transition. Integration of these countries into the emerging global information network is, in our minds, a central task for the United Nations. In this respect, we commend the personal involvement of the Secretary-General in this process, which resulted in the setting up of the ICT Task Force. We are also grateful to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Nitin Desai, and to his able staff for preparing the background for this high-level dialogue and for the roundtables.

Beyond the technological advances, what is actually new about the so-called new economy in the twenty-first century? The world economy in the twenty-first century is characterized by dynamism, competition becoming global and the increasing number of network actors. Industry has a more flexible capacity for production, which is based on knowledge and is driven by digitization. The importance of research and innovation is higher than before, and firms make alliances in order to increase their market share and to have a better competitive position on the market.

This economic mutation is linked to two main developments. The first is the exponential growth of the Internet. The second is the growing power of information. Knowledge, ideas and brainpower are becoming the world's main economic resources. Intangible goods — content and software — represent an ever-growing share of the economy.

These developments have a profound impact on our way of doing business. We are witnessing the emergence of electronic commerce. The ICT revolution offers huge potential for human and societal progress. Business no longer needs to take place in highly developed and densely populated areas. Anybody, anywhere can play an active role or benefit from the new Internet services.

This, however, depends on a few essential conditions. First, it depends on the availability of a powerful and seamless communication infrastructure. Secondly, people need new skills to play an active role. They need what we call digital literacy. Greater participation requires that we find new ways of behaving. In the past decades, we all lived in a fairly static economy. Now the Internet opens up an era of intense creative thinking, with ideas competing against ideas. The new economy calls for bold minds, an innovative spirit, open-mindedness and vision.

The Millennium Declaration identified five key areas as development imperatives — health, education, economic opportunity, empowerment and participation, and the environment — and underscores the importance of interrelated factors to be addressed in order to maximize the benefits of ICT for development.

This includes building human capacity, creating incentives for enterprises and increasing competition, especially among telecommunications and Internet-related businesses. The strategy is to guide stakeholders in investing in ICT and in implementing strategies that take advantage of the potential of ICT to accelerate social and economic development.

In order to enhance the integration of Romania in the emerging global information network, we, in my country, adopted four specific laws. The first concerns the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of these data. The second regards the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the telecommunications sector. The third is a law on electronic signatures, and the fourth is a law on electronic commerce.

In February 2001, the ICT Promotion Group (GPTI) was created, led by the Prime Minister and composed of the "e-ministers", ministers that have a stake in moving towards "e-development". That group has the mandate to facilitate and integrate all e-developments for the benefit of Romanian citizens and businesses.

A critical constraint on enhanced integration into the emerging global information network is the lack of public funds available to developing countries. Partnership between the private sector and the public sector is crucial, because the private sector has to invest in e-developments and has to raise funds in order to build an information society for all.

The United Nations has to play a catalytic role in fighting against the digital divide and in bringing together all stakeholders in order to build a better world for everyone. The future starts with us today, and if we are not doing something now, who will be doing it, and when? If not we, who? And if not now, when?

Mr. Navarrete (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico is very pleased to see you, Mr. Minister, presiding over this dialogue and thus highlighting its importance.

I reiterate the sorrow and solidarity already conveyed by the Mexican Government to the United States at the atrocious terrorist attacks that nine days ago took the lives of so many citizens of the United States and of other countries. The Mexican Government has officially declared that those acts constitute genuine crimes against humanity, that they undermine the very foundations of civilized coexistence among nations, and that they pose a grave threat to international peace and security. For those reasons, the Mexican Government categorically condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of its political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other motivations.

The central topic of this second high-level dialogue is of paramount importance to the Mexican Government. My country is participating in a spirit of constructive unity. We see this forum as a fresh opportunity for us to reflect together, as we have done all morning, on globalization, which has had an impact on every aspect of life in our societies and on the functioning of our institutions, in terms both of their internal relationships and of links with the community of nations. Globalization — the name we have given to the way today's world functions — has created new opportunities for growth and for development, and has spawned innovative ways to promote international cooperation, scientific advancement, development and peace. That has already been acknowledged by preceding speakers in this dialogue.

Moreover, globalization has made us understand the need to adopt measures to ensure that everyone can share in those opportunities and to reduce and eventually eliminate the risks of marginalization, fragmentation and exclusion within our societies and within the community of nations. It is a fact recognized here this morning that not all countries and not all sectors of society have shared equally in the various networks of globalization. Some nations enjoying solid economic and social development have been able to avail themselves of its advantages, but most developing countries have been unable to take advantage of the opportunities that globalization offers.

Likewise, within countries, globalization has had disparate effects. While some individuals and some sectors of society — those with access to technological progress; those best connected with local and international markets; those who are best educated — have been able to benefit fully from the opportunities offered by this process, others — in many countries, unfortunately, the large majority — have been excluded. That has contributed to exacerbating inequality and has eroded social coherence, both within nations and throughout the world.

If there is any common thread in the statements we have heard this morning, it is that globalization has not to date made a tangible contribution to reducing the development gap, to improving the distribution of income and wealth, or to engendering equal opportunity within countries or among nations. That must change.

The harrowing days through which we are living remind us that globalization without opportunities for all countries, particularly developing countries and the least developed among them, will bring with it dangerous imbalances and will make the world less functional for us all. One of the key characteristics of globalization is that it can strengthen the circuits that transmit the dynamic impulses of trade and investment. But in addition, as we can see in the present widespread slow-down of the world economy, the impulses of recession can also be speedily transmitted and can spread unless a coordinated and, sometimes, simultaneous response is made.

I am thinking of the decisions to reduce interest rates taken early this week by the financial authorities of the United States of America, the European Union and some of the principal emerging economies. That is the kind of multilateral coordinated action that can help improve the functioning of a globalized world economy.

Mexico is convinced that international cooperation and agreement are the best tools for promoting the equitable progress of peoples in a globalized world.

From my Government's perspective, in order to achieve an increasing and positive inclusion of the developing countries in the world economy during the twenty-first century, there is a need for resolute action by all nations on several fronts — resolute action in support of the national effort to mobilize resources, which is at the core of growth and development. These fronts include, inter alia, trade, foreign debt, international cooperation and development financing.

In order to facilitate the integration of the developing countries in the global economy in the century that is now beginning — and this is the central topic of this dialogue — it is necessary better to understand the nature, the scope and the consequences of the growing interdependence of the world economy. We must better understand also the fact that national economic policy actions, and particularly those of the most developed countries, have an impact on the global environment and affect development for all. That influence and those consequences must increasingly be borne in mind.

As has already been indicated by several speakers, in March 2002 Mexico will have the privilege of hosting the International Conference on Development Financing, which is designed to examine financing and other development topics in a holistic fashion, in the context of globalization and interdependence, with the objective of shaping a world alliance in favour of a better-balanced and more participative globalization and the building of an economic order that can ensure development for all and contribute to the eradication of poverty.

In this dialogue on the promotion of integration and of ways of combating exclusion in the world economy, Mexico reiterates its appeal to the international community; to the Governments of industrialized countries, of countries in transition, and of the developing countries; to the competent institutions of the United Nations system; to the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO); to private enterprise; and to non-governmental entities and civil society, that they continue to participate actively and positively in all of the preparatory stages of the International Conference on Development Financing and in the Conference itself, including the participation of heads of State and Government in the summit stage.

Mexico is committed to a globalization without marginalization or exclusion, in which poverty is eradicated and which places the well-being and dignity of persons as the centre of national development efforts and of actions for international cooperation.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset I should like to express the pain and horror that we in Algeria feel following the appalling attacks on New York and on Washington. We vehemently condemn these acts and feel immense sympathy for the people and the Government of the United Nations, as well as for the families of the victims, who are facing adversity with courage and dignity. These heinous crimes merely strengthen our conviction that terrorism is a global threat that challenges us all and requires a response that, in order to be effective, must be global and concerted.

Algeria, which has always called for a genuine, strengthened cooperation among all Member States and which has faced terrorism almost alone, will fail to provide full cooperation to international efforts to eradicate once and for all this modern scourge, to which no one is immune.

Allow me, until a more authoritative voice than mine can do so, to address heartfelt congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly, and to assure you of the full cooperation of the Algerian delegation as you discharge the lofty task that has been entrusted to you by the international community.

In the Millennium Declaration, the international community pledged to halve, by the year 2015, the number of people in the world living in poverty. It recommended, inter alia, the implementation of programmes to expand access to health care and to education, and it called for the formulation of job-creation strategies. Convinced of the benefits of controlled globalization for the developing countries, the Millennium Assembly furthermore sought to direct its strategies towards the goal of making new technologies available to all, in particular information and communication technologies (ICTs), which, in the new economy, will increasingly determine access to the labour market and which, naturally, relate to the problem of the integration of the developing countries into the economy of the twenty-first century. It thus established a link between trade globalization and the need to develop networks, thereby encompassing the various salient concerns of our discussion.

In the context of the debate on the relationship of developing countries to globalization, Algeria sees in our interconnected economy a growth opportunity for those countries, and in ICTs a historic chance for them to become part of the world economy, to catch up to a certain extent with the developed countries and to increase their eligibility for the partnerships that will be required by the economy of the twenty-first century, without being overly preoccupied at the present stage with what is called the digital divide.

We also believe that ICTs represent a major building block for the national and regional economies of those countries, with multiple benefits in terms of opening up land-locked countries, controlling costs and performance in public services, and a valuable tool for policies aimed at good governance and the democratization of social relations.

ICTs, if put to use to assist developing countries in the area of international trade, will develop their comparative advantages, promote their ability to compete and enhance their knowledge of the major world markets, and therefore their access to them.

It has been acknowledged that trade in goods and services, which is based primarily on networks, represents the first stage at which developing countries make contact with globalization and is their entry point into the Internet economy.

The resulting increase in the proportion of those countries involved in global trade should definitely generate the financial resources that are necessary for establishing the basic conditions for the resurgence of their economies, and subsequently should provide a driving force for sound, sustained growth.

It must be said, however, that the true conditions under which these countries are developing do not come close to reflecting that idyllic vision.

While it is true that the developing countries are steadfast in their desire to take advantage of globalization and the new technologies associated with it, they still need to build the infrastructure necessary for taking on board such technology and to strengthen national capacities that will enable them to be used at a complex and economically effective level.

At this stage, for the most part, they are confronting the problems associated with the level of development of education in their countries and the performance of the educational system — elements that are essential in this knowledge-based economy and for which considerable financial input is required.

In order to give young people, who form the majority of the population, the qualifications that they need to enable them to become part of this intensely knowledge-based job market and to make this trained group a decisive factor in attracting investment and promoting economic growth, these countries are looking to official development assistance to provide them with the initial impetus that would enable them to trigger this beneficial cycle, after which private resources will take over to finance the economy and supplement the budget.

Together with other African countries, Algeria shares the view expressed in the New African Initiative, adopted last July in Lusaka, that it is the primary responsibility of the countries concerned to bring about the recovery of Africa, and the developing countries in general, through the adoption of sound economic and budgetary policies, as well as social practices that are consonant with good governance. But Africa and Algeria also believe that, in the initial stages, this effort of recovery will require assistance in the form of resources derived from an increase in absolute terms of official development assistance, from direct private investment and, in particular, from deeper, broader external debt-relief measures.

We believe that this relief process should take the form of debt conversion in favour of social programmes, the primary effect of which would be to increase the public funds necessary for human development, education and health — the key conditions that must be met in order successfully to bring about the integration of our countries into the economy of the twenty-first century.

In this respect, we believe that the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative is a positive step and should be welcomed, despite the manifest sluggishness of the mechanism. We believe that a more relaxed approach should be taken towards the criteria for its implementation. Furthermore, we would like to stress that we attach importance to strengthening and expanding that initiative by allocating additional resources before an initiative is launched to relieve the debt of other, so-called medium-income countries, which, I need hardly recall, account for most of the people targeted by the poverty-reduction goal that the international community is seeking to achieve by 2015.

In conclusion, I would like to state that Algeria intends to take advantage of the context offered by the preparatory process for the Monterrey Conference so as to present the detailed proposals contained in the New African Initiative to the donors and eminent specialists who have been brought in by the Secretary-General with a view to ensuring the success of the international dialogue. Clearly, the process must continue after this meeting if we are to ensure that the financial resources are commensurate with the seriousness of the social situation throughout the world and the urgent need to improve it.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): Since I am addressing the General Assembly at this session for the first time since the horrendous tragedy that struck both this great city of New York and Washington, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our profound sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of the United States and to all of the victims. There has been a horrendous and colossal loss of innocent lives from all over the world, not just the United States; more than 60 countries have lost nationals. Our thoughts and prayers go to the victims, the departed souls and the bereaved.

This is also the first time that I am addressing the General Assembly under your presidency, Sir. It is a special pleasure to see you in the Chair, representing a country with which I have had a personal association, having served for several years as my country's ambassador in Korea, which is known as the country of the morning calm. I would like to convey my felicitations to you on your assumption of the presidency. Knowing your skills and professionalism as I do, I am confident that you will steer this session of the Assembly to a fruitful and productive conclusion.

Addressing myself to the theme of the integration of developing countries into the world economy, I would like to begin by associating the delegation of Pakistan with the statement of the Group of 77 and China.

Globalization is a complex and multidimensional process. It is reshaping our economic, social, cultural and political values. With its edifice premised on the four pillars of technology, trade, investment and financial flows, the impact of globalization is ubiquitous. What we are witnessing is a whole new paradigm for creating a world without borders with unhindered circulation of goods and services — a new paradigm based on new patterns of cooperation on the basis of justice, equity, partnership and interdependence.

Prima facie, globalization has opened enormous opportunities for development. Spurred by rapid economic growth, the global economy touched a cyclical high in the past decade. World trade volumes have undergone a manifold increase. The size of the global economy continues to expand. These are, indeed, promising prospects.

Then there is the other side of the picture. It is an undeniable fact that globalization is being experienced differently and unequally.

It has accentuated the disadvantaged position of vulnerable groups and caused growing economic inequalities among countries and regions. This is manifested in the increasing digital divide, rising income inequalities and concentration of economic power through mega-mergers.

The fact of the matter is that the process of globalization is asymmetric, with some winners but many losers. It has created aspirations for consumption patterns and life styles that cannot be sustained socially, culturally, politically or environmentally.

The developing countries are convinced that their attempts to integrate their economies into the global economy stand little chance of success unless an enabling environment that allows them to maximize benefits and minimize costs of integration is created. This is possible only by customizing the process of integration to the specific needs and levels of economic development of a country and the capacity of its existing institutions and industries, and by involving them in preparing the rules of the game.

An important facet of globalization is trade liberalization, which is presented to us as a panacea for accelerated growth and development. One cannot help but observe that there are stark inequities afflicting the multilateral trading system. Consequently, developing countries have not gained any meaningful market access in the key areas where they have a clear comparative advantage, such as in textiles and agriculture.

Absence of genuine trade liberalization in these areas is accompanied by other measures to restrict developing countries' exports. These include safeguard measures, anti-dumping practices, subsidies and countervailing measures, and arbitrary rules of origin. In contrast, developing countries face a situation where their traditional knowledge in medicine, music, art and design are often appropriated by the developed countries without any compensation.

Trade liberalization demands elimination of all barriers. This would need equitable global regulation. Sadly, the reality is grossly different. The rules of the game are unequal in construct, and inequitable in outcomes. Some countries have the power to set the rules and invoke them, but the weak and vulnerable ones have neither. As a result, national boundaries do not matter for trade flows or capital flows, but do matter for technology flows, intellectual property regimes and the movement of labour.

Trade is only one dimension of the process of the integration of developing countries into the global economy. One cannot ignore the crucial importance of other aspects of the development process, especially financing for development. In this regard, we have pinned great hopes on the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico early next year. The Monterrey Conference provides a unique opportunity for all stakeholders to harmonize their development policies. Let us not miss this golden opportunity to channel the forces of globalization in support of development.

It is indeed very timely and welcome that we in this high-level dialogue are addressing a subject and overarching theme which is international cooperation for economic development of developing countries and this is one of the six themes of the financing for development process which we are currently addressing.

Official development assistance and foreign private capital flows are important ingredients to growth and development in developing countries, and to the modernization of their production processes. Similarly, the importance of expanding the channels for foreign direct investment, and transfer of technology, particularly information and communications technology (ICT), to developing countries can hardly be over-emphasized.

Another important facet of integration is finding durable solutions to the external debt problem that burdens the developing countries. Regrettably, this problem has a debilitating impact on the resources allocated for development needs. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and enhanced HIPC initiatives are welcome developments, but given the phenomenal debt burden of the developing countries, this is too little, too late. Apart from HIPC there are several middle-income developing countries whose debt burdens have reached unsustainable levels. In certain cases, the indices of debt distress are close to those of HIPC countries. The need of the hour is an effective, comprehensive, equitable and development-oriented strategy to address the debt problem of the developing countries, including debt reduction and increased concessional financial flows for all developing countries. The United Nations, in consultation with the donor countries and international financial institutions, could take a lead in preparing workable options in this regard. One readily available option is diverting some of the debt servicing payments towards social sector development in the developing countries.

Integrating the developing countries into the global economy requires a holistic and comprehensive approach. In this regard, greater participation of developing countries in the management of global economic, financial and trading systems is of pivotal importance. To make globalization work for all, in the words of the Secretary-General and as envisioned by our leadership also in the Millennium Declaration, the economic, financial and social challenges confronting humanity will have to be addressed by all stakeholders, based on cooperation, partnership, and interdependence. Let us rise to the higher plane of consensus building in support of development. We have reason to believe that the problems of globalization can be addressed by a global response alone.

The promise and perils of globalization should be shared and managed through open, democratic, transparent and participating multilateralism. At this time of increased global interdependence, we need international institutions to ensure that everyone reaps the fruits of globalization. Needless to say, the United Nations, a democratic institution with universal membership, has a central and crucial role to play in meeting this global challenge.

The President: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. I thank the Representatives for their perseverance. We shall hear the remaining speakers this afternoon at 3 p.m. Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to draw your attention to a matter concerning the maintenance of order in the General Assembly Hall. There have been many instances where cellular phones ring in the General Assembly Hall while the meeting is in progress. The ringing of cellular phones interferes with, and is disruptive to, the orderly proceedings of the meetings. I sincerely hope that the digital revolution will help, not hamper, the proceedings in the General Assembly. In this regard I shall like to strongly urge you and members of your delegation to turn your cellular phone ringer off or to keep them in the silent mode while in the General Assembly Hall. I thank you for your cooperation.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to inform Members that the General Assembly will take up agenda item 166, “Measures to eliminate international terrorism”, on Monday, 1 October 2001, in the morning. The list of speakers is now open.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations A/56/PV.5

General Assembly

Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

5th plenary meeting
Thursday, 20 September 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han .... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 97 (*continued*)

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(c) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): At the outset, please accept my delegation's congratulations on your election, as well as the assurances of our fullest cooperation in ensuring the success of this high-level dialogue and of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Allow me also, Mr. President, to take this opportunity on behalf of my government to extend to the city of New York and the people and Government of the United States of America our deepest condolences on the barbaric terrorist attacks of last week. We stand with the United States and the international community in condemning last week's outrage. We also wish to associate ourselves with the statement of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 earlier this morning.

This dialogue takes place at a crucial time. As the mechanism for the follow-up to the Agenda for Development, we have the opportunity to assess how the agreed outcome has withstood the test of time, in particular how our objectives have fared in their implementation. As a result of the lessons learned, we can also look forward to applying our experience in order to work towards successful outcomes at the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit for Sustainable Development. In this respect, our theme for this dialogue "Responding to globalization: facilitating the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century" also, indeed, encompasses the objectives of both the financing for development and the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) processes.

During our meeting, we must keep foremost in our minds the idea that the objective of development is not only economic growth, but also concrete and sustainable improvements in the quality of the lives of the majority of humanity over time, in both absolute and relative terms. Our goal at this high-level dialogue and the task of this organization, insofar as development is concerned, is to provide the political impetus for the fulfilment of the developmental commitments, particularly those enshrined in the Millennium Declaration. My delegation also looks forward to this dialogue as being an input to both the financing for development and WSSD preparatory processes.

Towards this end, my delegation wishes to make the following points:

First, we must continue to foster a holistic and sustainable approach to development, taking into

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account individual peculiarities and circumstances. We must develop a new consensus model of development that takes into account the views, needs and priorities of all partners in development, particularly the recipient developing countries, who are, after all, the object of development. This new consensus model of development is what many hope will emerge as one of the major outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

Secondly, my delegation believes that it is each country's primary responsibility to pursue its unique development process. At the same time, we recognize that, in many cases, the indigenous capacity of developing countries to pursue development efforts, including competing in the global economy, may be insufficient because the international environment and community play a significant role in influencing the pace and direction of development, especially in this age of globalization.

The international community should, therefore, taking into account the diversity among nations and specific country circumstances, promote an international environment conducive to development and the integration of developing countries in the global economy. This effort should also be geared to maximizing the sustainability of development efforts, both with respect to maintaining long-term economic growth, as well as in managing the resulting impact on the environment and the social infrastructure. Achieving this would also contribute to ensuring and maintaining international peace and security. We should also avoid, as one development expert has noted, "overdetermining development" by setting forth an abundance of prescriptions that, in the final analysis, say that everything development brings is a necessary input to achieving it.

Thirdly, the participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making processes should be enhanced.

Finally, we must ensure that as we discuss the bridging of the digital divide, we do not neglect the importance of strengthening domestic economic fundamentals, which in most developing countries are linked to external economic developments and factors.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) *(spoke in French):* I would like to begin by warmly congratulating you on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that under your guidance the work of this second high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership will be a great success.

Allow me to reiterate Tunisia's condolences to the American people and Government following the terrorist attacks that occurred last week. My delegation also fully endorses the statement made this morning by the Chairman of the Group of 77. My delegation is pleased that this second high-level dialogue is being held and we are also pleased with the judicious selection of the items included on our agenda, which are at the core of the concerns of the international community. Coming in the wake of the Millennium Summit and on the eve of important events, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which will include a 10-year review of the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development and is scheduled to be held in South Africa in 2002, this dialogue takes on a particular importance. It will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss the strategy for the millennium, a strategy designed to create a climate that will be favourable to the development and integration of developing countries in the globalized economy, to eliminating poverty and cutting in half the percentage of people in the world whose income is less than one dollar a day by the year 2015, and to promoting access to the markets of the North of the products of the countries in the South — an order which, in short, will establish a more just, more humane and more equitable world economy, where the benefits of globalization will be distributed equally and equitably.

The world has entered a new millennium and yet it has still not been able to solve the inexorable problems of poverty and underdevelopment. The realization of economic well-being for all is one of the primary objectives of the United Nations, and one that is far from being achieved. We note with bitterness the persistence of many signs of lack of respect for the dignity of man.

Also, in many countries, and especially in Africa, people continue to suffer from a number of scourges, such as epidemics, malnutrition, armed conflict and civil wars — scourges which appeal to the human conscience and demand the establishment of a true partnership between or among all nations based on shared development and solidarity.

In the face of this situation, Tunisia's President has, since 1989, spoken here on the need to reflect on an international contract for peace and progress to build a better future for the international community. We are, in fact, convinced that progress in the area of a sustainable development will not be accomplished unless there is a partnership between the North and the South based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility.

It augurs well that the Millennium Summit declared solidarity a basic, fundamental value among the values that should govern international relations in the twenty-first century. Leaders of the entire world have also stressed the urgency of taking action to fight poverty. This is the framework for the proposal made by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to create a world solidarity fund to help eliminate poverty and promote social and human development in the poorest areas of the world. This proposed world solidarity fund is an instrument which will complement or add to the various existing mechanisms and should be financed by voluntary contributions and grants.

Tunisia has launched this initiative on the basis of a national experience which proved effective and which made it possible to reduce poverty, which is estimated today at around 6 per cent, through solidarity. We are pleased to see that the General Assembly has greeted this initiative favourably in its resolution 55/210, and we invite all Member States of the United Nations and international institutions to contribute to making this project a reality on the occasion of this fifty-sixth session so that we may further solidarity and peace in the world.

We cannot have development without development financing. Tunisia therefore attaches great importance to the International Conference on Financing for Development which is scheduled to take place in Monterrey, Mexico, 18 to 22 March 2002. We trust that this conference will provide an opportunity for discussing the various aspects of financing for development and that important decisions and conclusions will be adopted that will take into account the concerns of developing countries. Among these concerns are those relating to reversing decline in official development assistance, foreign debt, and capital fluctuations and the volatility in direct private investments. This conference should also make it possible to put in place a new international financial infrastructure that will provide for ways to prevent, manage and settle financial crises.

The Secretary-General, in his annual report, A/56/1, stressed that information and communications technologies are a good way of drawing the potential benefits from globalization. We note, however, that developing countries have not been able to profit fully from the fast-paced progress in these areas in recent years. The global nature of this new environment and the unequal pace of its development — sometimes referred to as the digital divide — make it essential that we set up an international dialogue and implement global approaches to facilitate adaptation to this new reality and to improve the involvement of developing countries in the global information network.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General is launching a United Nations study group on information and communications technologies as a result of the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council in July 2001. The main task of this group will be to exploit the various possibilities provided by information and communications technologies.

We believe that efforts to close the digital divide will be intensified on the eve of worldwide summits which are to be organized by the United Nations system, in close cooperation with the International Communication Union (ITU), in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis is 2005. The choice of Tunisia to host the second phase of this summit shows the desire of the international community to reduce the technology gap between the North and the South and to foster development, peace and justice — which is the mission of the United Nations in all regions of the world.

Africa is assuredly a continent that deserves special attention on the part of the international community. The Millennium Summit clearly stressed this need and invited the United Nations system to play the role of a catalyst in mobilizing resources for the development of this continent and its integration into the global economy. African countries have made enormous sacrifices to undertake the structural reforms of their economies and to guarantee the success of their development plans on the basis of their own resources. However, political, economic and social challenges facing the continent are such that it has been impossible for it to ensure its own development without the cooperation of the international community, especially of the United Nations.

We would like, therefore, to reiterate our appeal for increased mobilization in favour of the development of Africa and for the establishment of a true international partnership. We stress the need to proceed with complete or partial cancellation of the African debt and converting it for financing development projects and projects to fight poverty and protect the environment. We believe that it is vital that the international community adopt specific measures to promote trade and commerce and to ensure that Africa will profit from advances in new technologies and in information and communications, as well as from the investment and capital flows.

We are convinced that our discussions in plenary as well as at roundtables and in informal working groups, with the participation of non-governmental players, will enable us to arrive at important decisions which will be on a level with the commitments made at the Millennium Summit and will meet the aspirations of our peoples for progress and for prosperity.

Mr. Motomura (Japan): Please accept our warm congratulations, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly.

On behalf of the people and Government of Japan, I extend my profound sympathy and condolences to those who suffered losses in the recent terrorist attacks, as well as to all the people and the Government of the United States of America. Japan deplores the heinous acts of terrorism that were perpetrated against the United States on 11 September. These acts must be considered not only as assaults against the United States, but as crimes against humanity.

Today I would like to comment on three issues that are related to the strengthening of international economic cooperation for development through partnership and the integration of developing countries into the world economy.

First of all, I would like to point out that the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in helping the international community to cope with globalization is indispensable. ICT has the potential to increase productivity and to create and sustain economic growth and employment. In the light of this potential, it is important to ensure that everyone can benefit from ICT. In this regard, I recall that you, Sir, mentioned in your initial address as President of the General Assembly that

> "the General Assembly can make useful contributions by calling global attention to the need for bridging the digital divide." (*A/56/PV.1*)

I fully support your view on this matter.

On this occasion, I would like to refer to the announcement made by the Government of Japan in July 2000 of the worldwide "Comprehensive Cooperation Package to Address the International Digital Divide", for which it will make available a total of $15 billion over five years. Since then, Japan has dispatched dialogue missions to countries such as the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, Viet Nam, Malaysia, South Africa and Tunisia. Japan has also participated actively in the Digital Opportunity Task Force. The objective of these efforts is to eliminate the digital divide by ensuring that developing countries do not fall behind in their development efforts, and that everyone benefits from the potential of ICT. I would also like to take this opportunity to say that Japan looks forward to the success of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Mr. Baialinov (Kyrgyzstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The second issue I would like to comment on is that of financing, both public and private, for development. As we are all aware, official development assistance (ODA) plays an important role in the public financing of development. Japan has been the top donor of official development assistance for almost a decade, having provided a total ODA of more than $100 billion during that time. At present, however, the Government of Japan is reviewing its overall economic policies, including its ODA, under Prime Minister Koizumi's "structural reforms without sanctuaries" policy. The reason why Japan has provided approximately a quarter of the total ODA extended worldwide for almost the past decade, despite its severe economic and financial situation, is that it fully recognizes the importance of ODA in the economic development of developing countries. Under these circumstances, Japan is resolved to ensure that ODA projects are implemented in an efficient and effective manner.

With respect to our response to globalization, ODA has a number of important roles to play. One of them is the humanitarian role of a social safety net. It is important to assist those countries having trouble in weathering the storms of globalization on their own.

ODA can also prime the pump for attracting private funds through infrastructure building. Let me give some figures. In 2000, total ODA to developing countries throughout the world amounted to $50 billion, while foreign direct investment (FDI) in developing countries amounted to $240 billion. Thus, even this tremendous amount of ODA accounted for only 18 percent of total FDI. Accordingly, an important goal is to increase FDI in the developing world. ODA, which is less available than private funding, could support those measures taken by developing countries to attract foreign direct investment.

In connection with FDI, I would like to mention here the importance of coping with a chain reaction in which a financial crisis in one country could affect the international financial system as a whole, as we observed in the case of the Asian monetary crisis several years ago. In order to cope with that crisis, Japan adopted an approximately $30 billion financing scheme, called the "New Miyazawa Initiative," under which some Asian countries were able to avoid excessive dependence on short-term capital and build a long-standing and stable financing mechanism. Bilateral swap arrangements under the Chiang Mai Initiative have also been agreed upon to achieve the same objective.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I would like to stress the principle of "ownership and partnership", which Japan introduced at the Tokyo International Conferences on African Development. It is imperative for developing countries themselves to take appropriate measures to cope with the globalization process. At the same time, from the perspective of partnership, developed countries, United Nations agencies and international organizations, as well as other developing countries, are required to respond to the efforts made by the developing countries concerned. In particular, it is important to further deepen the dialogue with the private sector as a partner for development because private companies are leading the information technology revolution, and they are the sources of foreign direct investment.

While it is my sincere hope that today's gathering will provide the United Nations with new perspectives in the field of development, in March 2002 we will have an opportunity to discuss in greater depth the actions we should take in response to globalization, at the High-level Event on Financing for Development.

In concluding my remarks, let me express the hope that our actions today will lead to a greater understanding of the tasks that lie before each stakeholder and also lead to productive discussions in Mexico.

Mr. Sharma (India): As this is the first time I have spoken in the plenary this session, let me express our outrage at, and condemnation of, the monstrous act of terrorism perpetrated recently on the host country, and express our sympathy and condolences to the bereaved, and deep regret over the immense material damage that has been caused. We are encouraged to see that the phenomenon of terrorism is being perceived as a challenge to the international community as a whole, which is to show the determination to eradicate it from all parts of the world. This objective of the global community is closely linked with socio-economic stability and advancement, a subject that concerns us today.

Talking at this juncture, we have to be mindful of the context of the protests against skewed globalization, which have become a feature since Seattle in 1999, and indeed a serial phenomenon, seen in Melbourne, Prague, Seoul, Nice, Barcelona, Washington, Quebec City, Gothenburg and Genoa.

It would be a mistake to dismiss that phenomenon as foolish protesters or as a travelling circus of professional rioters and anarchists. It is true that on such occasions such elements see an opportunity for unfortunate, irresponsible and provocative behaviour, which then tends to receive media attention. Hopefully, a remedy can be found for that. However, we should be more mindful of the mood of disquiet and concern at the direction of globalization that that phenomenon represents.

Take some of the figures that have been cited. Last year, campaigners for debt relief for the world's poorest countries gathered 24 million names, the largest petition in history. Just two years ago, 25 protesters turned up at the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) annual meeting in Washington. Last year, the figure was 30,000. At the end of this month, for the truncated World Bank/IMF meeting — now cancelled — activists were predicting the presence of more than 50,000. A survey this summer in *Le Monde* showed that 56 per cent of people in France thought that multinational corporations had been the beneficiaries of globalization; only 1 per cent thought that consumers and citizens had benefited.

There are many areas of concern, such as domination of the profit motive, the deterioration of the environment, the lopsided advantage to those well placed to exploit the forces of globalization, the neglect of what should be the predominant poverty agenda and the lifting of lives of the poor, the erosion of confidence in the democracy and priorities of international institutions, the political influence of money, the anxiety of job insecurity, the sense of growing inequality, the commercialization of public spaces, supra-national authorities overshadowing national and local Governments, and a sense of powerlessness. There are many other concerns that feed into that mood of anxiety. There is a sense that the global order has become dysfunctional and iniquitous. That sense is exacerbated by the knowledge that in a globalizing world — with its resources of expanding trade, burgeoning investments, a foreign direct investment average of around $100 billion in the late 1980s and $900 billion a decade later, the movement of capital and the resources of science and technology — it should be more possible than ever before to put together a positive programme of change so that globalization is seen as a tide that lifts all boats, and not a process dividing the world into winners and losers, advantaged and deprived, corporate benefit and individual loss.

We should make no mistake about the fact that globalization and global capitalism are battling today to win the argument. We in the United Nations have the responsibility of conducting creative, constructive and purposeful deliberations to rectify the perceived shortcomings and to consider how that argument can be won. The high-level dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development is taking place at a time of renewed uncertainty about global economic prospects on account of the significant slowdown in major economies and the resultant decline in world output and trade. This dialogue was envisaged as a forum to discuss issues concerning the international economic environment, and thereby to promote convergence of perceptions and advance multilateral cooperation for development in a spirit of partnership based on mutual interests and shared benefits. We are confident that during this dialogue there will be stimulating and fruitful discussions on the theme "Responding to globalization: facilitating the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the twenty-first century", and on the two sub-themes.

The era of globalization and liberalization in which we live today promised to mankind unprecedented prosperity. It was hoped that the free flow of capital, goods and services would bring about sustained and equitable growth in all nations. This, however, has not happened. The benefits have accrued unevenly, resulting in a world where there is prosperity in a smaller part and poverty in the larger part, where disparities in income and wealth between nations and within nations are widening.

The figures attesting to that are common knowledge. Today, 66 countries are worse off than they were a decade ago. *The Economist*, in its issue of 16 June 2001, points out that there are more rich people than ever before, including some 7 million millionaires and over 400 billionaires, while at the same time, currently 2.8 billion people live on less $2 a day, and 1.2 billion on less than $1 a day. The average income in the richest 20 countries is in a different world from the average in the poorest 20. Clearly, we all need to work collectively to reverse this trend of increasing disparities and to ensure that globalization works for all — all nations and all segments of society.

Globalization done right — that is, supportive of the social and economic development objectives of developing countries — is what we need to ensure. We have to make certain — the choice is not between globalization and isolation — by coming to a common understanding on the terms on which equitable globalization would progress. We must ask ourselves, if it is so self-evident that globalization is a beneficial process, why that is not being universally recognized. The anxieties relate to disparities, unequal returns and a sense of vulnerability. We believe that our responses could lie in accepting the obligation of making the process universally acceptable by ensuring that it is universally beneficial. We need to look at ways and means by which developing countries can beneficially integrate into the world economy.

A number of developing countries have experienced low growth rates in the past two decades. It used to be thought that poor performance was due to weakness in domestic policies. But that explanation is less convincing because policies have in fact converged over the last decade. A large number of developing countries experiencing poor growth have been engaged in structural adjustment programmes.

The domestic reform agenda is familiar to us. Despite this, performance has fallen short of what was hoped for. Part of the explanation may be inadequate implementation at the national level, which may need to be addressed. There are, however, external constraints that can be addressed only jointly with the world community. This makes international dialogue more imperative than ever; it should embrace a range of issues, from strengthening the financial architecture to creating an enabling international environment through concerted action on trade, debt, private capital flows, official development assistance and the application of science and technology, including information and communication technologies.

In the coming period, three key events will offer us the opportunity to address the concerns of the developing countries and to move towards an equitable and inclusive world economy: the Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization, to be held in Doha in November; the Financing for Development Conference, to be held in Monterrey next March and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg next September. At these meetings we must demonstrate the political will to achieve the goals of sustained economic growth and sustainable development for all. We believe that our approach to the issues that require attention should be as follows.

In trade issues, we need to address outstanding implementation issues, including the implementation of special and differential clauses in favour of the developing countries in various World Trade Organization agreements. Protectionist measures and continued barriers in areas of priority to developing countries, such as agriculture, textiles and clothing, should be dismantled. The World Bank has pointed out that in agriculture alone the trade benefit from the removal of subsidies is envisaged to be $350 billion per annum.

We also need to examine ways and means by which private capital flows and foreign direct investment, which are becoming increasingly important as vehicles of external financial support, can be used for increasing productive capacity and infrastructure development in developing countries. In the case of short-term capital flows, we should seek to establish appropriate mechanisms to contain the sudden capital flights that can cause a breakdown in domestic economies.

Since private capital flows cannot be considered as a substitute for official development assistance (ODA), the developed countries should, in a time-bound manner, reverse the long decline in ODA, which has fallen to 0.22 per cent of their GDP, and work up quickly to the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent. It is crucial to stress the centrality of the core social agenda, essential for healthy growth, as stated in the Millennium Summit Declaration.

There is a need to build on the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, and push for wider, deeper and faster debt relief measures that would free resources from repayment cycles for use in national poverty eradication and development programmes. This relief should be linked to market access measures to ensure sustainability.

Decision-making structures through which governance is exercised internationally must be made broader and equitable by accommodating greater participation by, and a real voice for, developing countries. The international financial structure needs strengthening, as does the multilateral trade regime. Greater consistency and coherence must be achieved among macroeconomics, trade, aid and financial policies to ensure support for our common aim of expanding the benefits of globalization.

We need to find new and innovative resources for development priorities to supplement the traditional funds so as to achieve the international development goals within the agreed time frame. In this context, we note the renewed interest in the Tobin tax.

The international community must regenerate commitment at the highest political level for the implementation of Agenda 21 by identifying constraints and reaffirming its commitment to make available to the developing countries new and additional financial resources and to transfer to them environmentally sound technologies.

Globalization has been driven by new information and communication technologies. While ICT can play an important role in promoting development, there are constraints to accessing knowledge, particularly by citizens and institutions of developing countries. We believe that the ICT Task Force can play an invaluable role in bridging the digital divide, fostering digital opportunity and firmly putting ICT at the service of development for all. We must, however, guard against criminal networks; taking advantage of the most advanced technologies.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that the United Nations, with its universal membership and ability to undertake a holistic treatment, is uniquely placed to play an important role in the debate on globalization. We have had a most creative and constructive interaction with the Fund and the Bank. We further believe that we are at a moment in international economic discourse when significant shared ground has already been created. We are not talking past each other, but to and with each other. We need to build on this so that, with collective political resolve, we can consign poverty and hunger to the past and look forward to an equitable future for all humanity.

Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): May I first take this opportunity to express the profound sympathy and condolences of the Government and people of Ghana to the Government and people of the United States over the death and damage caused by the terrorist acts. We are acutely aware that such actions are not only attacks on our values as a civilized community but are also actions whose economic ramifications affect all countries, especially in this era of globalization.

My delegation considers this session of the high-level dialogue, which is being held in a period of a global economic slowdown, as timely, since it provides an opportunity to draw the necessary lessons from it and define a bolder vision to match the possibilities of globalization.

The recurrence of financial crises and economic slowdown in the midst of the market expansion driving globalization, and the persisting levels of poverty in the face of the unlimited potential of globalization to expand the wealth of nations, are an indication of our failure as a world community to harness the opportunities of globalization to their fullest.

Many people around the world today who should be part of the global markets are simply existing on its margins because they live on less than $2 a day. Many who should contribute value to those markets are either excluded from the value chain because they do not have the requisite skills or are at the periphery of productive activity which now requires new skills. Opportunities for educating a skilled labour force through knowledge networks and for raising the quality of life through technology-supported advances in education, health, nutrition, crop yields and entrepreneurial activity are being squandered, as the statistics continue to show. As a result, globalization, which is a process of integration of economies, culture, technology and governance, threatens to deepen the fissures of societies by increasing income gaps within and among nations.

Addressing the challenges of globalization would require measures that create opportunity for all countries and all people to participate in its processes, including the empowerment fostered by its easily accessed knowledge networks. Developing countries have a particular responsibility in this regard to build on their economic reform efforts of past decades to ensure a sound, stable macroeconomic environment capable of stimulating greater savings, preventing capital flight and attracting private sector investments, both local and foreign.

Equally, we must promote conditions of governance based on institutions and laws to enable our citizens to thrive on their creative abilities and to reap the benefits of stability and law and order. The effective development of our human resources, particularly through the design of forward-looking curricula to ride the crest of innovation, must take first priority in our development efforts. These efforts must take advantage of the work of the Information and Communication Technology Task Force.

Political and economic processes which promote market expansion at the regional level and stability are also crucial in this respect. In this connection, the intensified efforts to achieve integration, particularly in Africa, need to be pursued and supported to ensure their realization in the shortest possible time. The New African Initiative, which was adopted by African leaders in Lusaka, Zambia, in July, asserts that the advantages of effectively managed integration present the best prospects for future economic prosperity and poverty reduction. The New African Initiative, which is anchored in the fundamental principles of African ownership, leadership and accountability, also recognizes the importance of enhanced partnerships at the international level to enable Africa to achieve the objectives which it has set for itself.

To accept the primary responsibility for our own economic development does not therefore mean that developing countries on their own can achieve beneficial integration into the global economy. Decisions, actions and inaction of the so-called systemically significant economies, especially the developed countries, affect in a significant manner the ability of many developing countries to participate effectively in the global economy. Indeed, it is well understood that the most effective engagement with globalization must be global in scope. It was in this light that world leaders in their Millennium Declaration, only a year ago, called for policies and measures which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition.

The mix of policies necessary to sustain a supportive external economic environment conducive to accelerated development in developing countries remains essentially the same as those contained in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation. Not surprisingly, the thrust of the Millennium Summit was the recognition of the failure to achieve the objectives which are contained in the Declaration and the International Development Strategy for the last decade and a determination to reverse past performance.

An essential component of any new strategy to integrate developing countries into the global economy must include the strengthening of the international monetary and financial system through greater transparency on the part of all participants — private, public and multilateral — in the world economy; increased participation in decision-making in both formal and informal processes by developing countries, including through regional mechanisms; and multilateral surveillance to cover all economies, including the major economies.

The international financial organizations will need to go beyond promoting macroeconomic discipline and liberalization to support institution-building in such areas as markets, law enforcement and public governance to enable institutional convergence between developed and developing countries. The international financial institutions, as well as the United Nations, should, in the context of the development of markets, provide support for local private-sector activity through the establishment of much-needed long-term funds.

Together with the resources that could be leveraged through innovative public-private partnerships involving the International Finance Corporation and the multilateral and bilateral guarantee and insurance agencies, these resources would represent a considerable proportion of the investment needs of the developing countries bypassed by present capital flows. Whether this will be done depends on the political will of the richest nations. It is clear, though, that unless they act, the supportive actions of the international community will continue to be too little, too late. That has been the case with respect to the current measures on debt relief and international trade, two of the areas critical to any efforts towards integration of developing countries into the global economy.

We believe that debt relief policies, within the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, should reflect recognition of the need for those countries to achieve growth rates of 7-8 per cent per annum. The narrow definition of indices and the long drawn-out process of improving the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative end up being a self-defeating exercise.

It is clear that, if debt relief is to have an enduring impact, the developed countries will need to take decisive steps to address the concerns of developing countries over the implementation of the Uruguay Round undertakings, particularly the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, the Agreement on Agriculture, the provisions concerning special and differential treatment, the provisions on technical and other assistance by developed countries, as well as those issues relating to the built-in agenda. The World Trade Organization needs to be transformed to reflect the development dimension of trade and to ensure coherence in global policies in trade, finance and development.

The need to treat core policy areas as a package is not limited to external debt and international trade. It extends to systemic issues and foreign capital flows, including official development assistance. Official development assistance can be made to play a more pivotal role, either in the development of infrastructure, long-term funding for the private sector or enhancing the role of the United Nations towards the achievement of the international development goals. This can be done if official development assistance is made to respond to national programmes instead of to the project approach. Taking into account the role of the United Nations in the implementation of the development goals, it is time also to consider assessing contributions to United Nations operational activity.

In a few weeks, the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Financing for Development will meet to begin work on the outcome document. The objective of that Conference holds the key to the successful integration of developing countries into the global economy. An outcome that results in partnerships to create the conditions for the mobilization of resources for the sustained growth and sustainable development of developing countries would make globalization a positive force for all.

We must use this forum as an opportunity to send that signal to those who would negotiate the outcome document. We must expect nothing less than a global consensus which reflects both the imperative of increasing the wealth of all nations and recognition of the need for global solidarity in a global village.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): Like previous speakers, I would like to begin by reiterating our expression of sympathy to the people and Government of the United States in view of last week's terrorist attacks. The news of the attacks has caused commotion and outrage in Brazil. We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life and by the suffering of thousands of innocent victims and their families. Brazil condemns in the strongest terms all forms of terrorism. We will continue to support the joint cooperative efforts of the international community, including here in the General Assembly, to eradicate these intolerable practices, which are utterly inconsistent with the building of an international order based on the principles of justice.

The concept of globalization can be interpreted in many ways. Its consequences have been different for different groups and nations. There are those who believe that globalization is bringing about a period of unprecedented economic growth, allowing more countries to benefit from financial flows and the transfer of knowledge and technology. At the other extreme of the debate, it is argued that the process unleashed by globalization has been leading us to economic crises, increased social disparities, high levels of unemployment and the prevalence of market competition over social goals. Another fundamental question concerns the degree of freedom of States in the face of this new challenge and the reason why some countries are more able to adjust to this process than others.

Nobody disputes that many countries face a dramatic situation today. One third of the world's population lives on less than $2 a day, and globalization has not been able to meet the needs of developing countries. Therefore, there is an urgent need to promote and strengthen international cooperation.

How should we deal with this enormous challenge? I believe the theme of this dialogue points in the right direction, that is, towards facilitating the integration of developing countries into the global economy in the twenty-first century. Actually, what we need is not less, but more globalization — a genuine, more inclusive and more equitable globalization. The way out is not to stop the process, but to bring in more countries and more people. Our common efforts should be geared to offering opportunities for those who are on the fringe of globalization and do not have the conditions to benefit from it.

As Brazil stated during the preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development, the key word in this process must be integration. This long anticipated conference represents one of our most important efforts to address fundamental aspects of globalization. We hope that it will address the complexities derived from the variety of actors involved in this process and bring together all stakeholders. I mean developed and developing countries, multilateral institutions, the private sector and civil society. We hope that the Conference will allow for the evaluation of all matters essential to development, such as trade, systemic issues, capital movements and debt. We also hope that it will contribute to the implementation of all development goals set forth in the major conferences of the 1990s and the Millennium Declaration.

Let me now give some examples to explain the kind of globalization of which we are most in need. I will concentrate on three areas: trade, the international financial system and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

As far as trade is concerned, we need to move from the rhetoric to the practice of liberalization. Export sectors of interest to developing countries are still far from being subject to the same rules that apply to other sectors. Regrettably, protectionism persists. A number of tariff and non-tariff barriers severely hinder the exports of developing countries, among them tariff peaks and tariff escalation, quotas and the abusive utilization of antidumping measures. These policies have been used against agricultural goods, steel products and textiles, to mention just a few export items. Even worse, subsidies to the agricultural sector in developed countries amount to more than $1 billion a day.

Over the last decade, Brazil has opened up its market but has not met reciprocity. If free trade is a characteristic of globalization, then indeed there must be more globalization, which, in this case, means a fair world trading system that provides developing countries with better opportunities. Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated last July at the Economic and Social Council high-level event that the international community should restore the momentum of open markets by launching a new round of trade negotiations, which must be a true development round, in the sense that it would give genuine priority to the concerns and interests of developing countries.

Another important area is that of the international financial system. The financial crises of the mid- and late 1990s increased awareness regarding the adoption of sound macroeconomic policies. Brazil has implemented these policies, which, among other positive results, have contributed to economic stability and the present flow of foreign direct investment to my country.

Nevertheless, for these domestic policies to succeed, they must go hand in hand with an international enabling environment. Unfortunately, the risks of instability continue to hover over the international financial system. Since all countries may be affected, all of them should have a say in the international decision-making process. However, there is nowadays a participation deficit. Globalization consists not only in the emergence of certain new trends, but also in the need to establish appropriate frameworks for them, so that we can avoid a lack of governance and make it possible for everybody to benefit. Again, what we need is more globalization, but one that involves consistent and participatory governance of the international financial system.

Finally, let me make a few comments on ICT. Much has been said about its leapfrog effect on development. As this year's Human Development Report shows, technology is, as never before, a fundamental tool for development and economic growth. ICTs allow for significant progress in areas such as education, health, culture, trade, agriculture, industry, tourism, job creation and even government transparency.

In these areas, Brazil has carried out many initiatives, at both the domestic and the international levels. The Brazilian Government has implemented an Information Society Programme, which aims at expansion of economic activities based on intensive use of ICT and the increase in the number of Internet users in the country.

Brazil has also taken part in international fora, such as the United Nations Task Force, and followed closely the developments in the DOT Force. Last June, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil organized a meeting on ICT for development in order to discuss this issue with other developing countries members of Economic and Social Council and following the activities of the DOT Force. The declaration that emanated from that meeting emphasized the importance that developing countries effectively participate in international decision-making processes concerning information and communication technologies taking into account their economic, political, environmental, cultural and social impact.

As a matter of fact, information and communication technologies are a central feature in the globalization process. It has been said that, with the advent of ICT, many decisions can be made at the push of a button. More people should be given an opportunity to press the button of globalization. In this case, globalization means providing developing countries with more access to knowledge and technology.

One of the commonplaces used with reference to globalization is that there is nobody in charge. However, the conclusion to be drawn from the three examples that I gave is that there are institutions dealing with globalization. What we need is more integration and more participation of developing countries, both in the formulation and in the implementation of international policies.

Globalization is a reality, not an ideology. It does not create by itself foundations for hope for a better future for the poor. Hope now has to be recreated by deeds. Achieving concrete progress on concrete issues is the only way to restore hope — a fundamental ingredient in our still divided society, which is still divided in unacceptable ways. Effective and clear signs that globalization could be the foundation for more equitable development are urgently needed.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): It is with a heavy heart that we participate in this high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, in the light of the recent tragic events afflicting our host country and our host city. On behalf of my Government and of my delegation, I express Malaysia's utter shock and revulsion at and strong condemnation of the recent heinous terrorist attacks, and offer our most profound condolences to the Government and the people of the United States and to other countries that have lost nationals as a result of those attacks. We will have another occasion to address this matter more substantively.

I wish to congratulate Ambassador Han on his election as President of the General Assembly at this session, and to assure him of our fullest cooperation.

The themes for our deliberations are particularly relevant in the context of our times, which are characterized by globalization, interdependence and revolution in the sphere of information and communications technology (ICT), among other areas. We hope that this dialogue will help promote broader and deeper understanding of these issues and their inter-linkages, and that it will provide a greater impetus for the promotion of international economic cooperation that will facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made this morning by the Chairman of the Group of 77, which highlighted comprehensively the concerns of the developing countries in responding to the challenges posed by globalization and in integrating their economies with the global economy. I wish, however, to make additional remarks on a few of the issues already raised by the Chairman of the Group of 77, from the perspective of Malaysia.

One of the chief features of the current global economic situation is the disadvantaged position of the South vis-à-vis the North in spite of the much-trumpeted spirit of cooperation, complementarity and integration with the global economy. Whatever changes have taken place at the global level have not fundamentally changed the basic relationship between the developed and the developing countries, which continues to be characterized by the dominance of the wealthy North and the marginalization of the poor South.

The adverse position of the developing countries has been further worsened by the impact of globalization. Under globalization, with its increasing and more institutionalized linkages with, and dependence on, the developed North, the developing countries have become even more vulnerable to external factors. Nevertheless, globalization was embraced by the developing countries, first, because the process was perceived to be unstoppable and, secondly, in the hope and expectation that it would benefit the South. We are beginning to realize that globalization is not a universal remedy. It has its negative aspects, which must be seriously addressed if every State is to partake of the process in a meaningful way. This is important so as to ensure that the process benefits all States, not just a select and privileged few.

The Asian financial crisis was a telling reminder that playing by the rules of globalization, such as liberalizing the economy, does not automatically translate into more trade or faster growth and development for the developing countries. Nor does it ensure for those countries the protection of their hard-earned prosperity. Liberalization has its attendant risks, as Asian countries bitterly learned during the financial crisis. With that painful experience, there should be a better appreciation of the problems faced by the developing countries in integrating their economies with the global economy and of the need for appropriate measures to be taken to reduce the risks.

Clearly, the answer for the developing countries lies not in rejecting globalization, which is here to stay, but in adjusting to the process in a way that avoids, or at least minimizes, the risks. If the process is properly managed, there is no reason why globalization cannot result in a more equitable world order where wealth can be more evenly distributed between the rich and the poor. However, a partnership between them must first be forged.

To that end, it is necessary for the international community seriously to address a number of fundamental systemic issues so as to bring about a more level playing field. That process should begin with a revamping of the international financial architecture aimed at making it more transparent, accountable and participatory, so as to enable the developing countries, which constitute two-thirds of the world, to participate more effectively in the decision making processes at the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, among other institutions. Only in that way will the critical needs of developing countries be brought to the fore, thus facilitating their integration into the global economy. As an integral part of that process, there is a critical need to improve the infrastructure in many developing countries, especially in the least developed among them. It is clear that the advancement of those countries would be a major fillip for the globalization process. Hence the importance of assisting them in the building of their infrastructure. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Honourable Mahathir Mohamad, has on several occasions spoken about the need to focus on this issue at the international level and about the desirability of creating a dedicated pool of international financing for the development of infrastructure in the poor developing countries.

One of the most important dimensions of globalization, one which needs to be seriously addressed, is the revolution in information and communications technology. The world of today is firmly into the information age, where economics and every other aspect of human endeavour will hinge on the production, accumulation and application of knowledge. It is well acknowledged that ICT can play an important part in accelerating growth, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development in both the developing countries and the transition economies, while facilitating their integration into the global economy. Recognizing that ICT can become a powerful and effective tool for development, and in order to exploit the opportunities presented by the advances in information technology, the Malaysian Government has embarked on an ambitious programme for the full utilization of ICT in the country's development. It has developed an information technology hub called the multimedia super-corridor, measuring 15 by 50 kilometres and stretching from the capital city of Kuala Lumpur to the new international airport. The corridor offers a conducive environment for companies wishing to develop innovative information technology and multimedia products and services and to harness the full potential of multimedia. The development of the corridor is testimony to the Government's determination to catapult Malaysia into the knowledge economy in spite of the financial costs involved.

Unfortunately, while the development of ICT holds out prospects for accelerated growth in a few of the developing countries, that may not be so in many others. This is because of the increasingly fierce competition for investment funds for ICT projects; therefore, the multimedia super-corridor model in Malaysia may not be easily duplicated in other developing countries. It is likely that, for a considerable period of time in the future, the digital divide will continue to pose challenges for many developing countries in their efforts to integrate themselves into the global economy. That is to be expected due to the great disparities between the developed and the developing countries in the utilization of ICT. Less than 5 per cent of the world's population is engaged in activities related to ICT. While vast numbers of computers in the developed world are Internet-connected, many countries in Asia and Africa are still grappling with severe shortages of telephone lines, not to mention the problems of lack of electricity and a high level of illiteracy. Unless these and related problems are tackled satisfactorily, it is likely that the information and knowledge gaps between developed and developing countries will continue to widen and be made worse by globalization.

What is urgently needed is nothing less than a paradigm shift. The thrust of globalization needs to be reoriented, from one that is driven by the rich and developed countries to one of partnership between them and the developing countries, taking into cognizance the concerns and interests of the latter. Its redefinition must take place through a multilateral and democratic process, with the informed participation of all countries.

In this regard, the United Nations has an important role to play. It should assume its rightful and intended role as the institutional and policy apex, based on dialogue and collaborative efforts. We fully agreed with the Secretary-General when he said last year that "we must not let the new information technologies become another resource that divides rich and poor nations". We share his view that concrete and efficient actions are needed, at both the national and international levels, to spread information technology and its benefits to the developing world so as to ensure that poor countries can join the knowledge-based global economy.

It is in this context that Malaysia welcomes and fully supports the establishment of a United Nations ICT Task Force. We have always believed that effective development requires a careful balancing of the roles of Governments and the other stakeholders, including the private sector, across a broad range of policies and actions. Through both good and difficult times, Malaysia has always emphasized a strong public-private partnership. This policy has enabled us to reach a higher level of international competitiveness and to participate more actively in the emerging global information economy.

It is our hope that the ICT Task Force will be able to bring together a broad-based coalition of multilateral institutions, the private sector, foundations and trusts, as well as bilateral donors, in order to mobilize resources to enable developing countries to benefit from the advancement of ICT. The United Nations ICT Task Force should be effectively used to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in promoting access to digital opportunities and to bridge the existing digital divide.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Let me join other speakers in expressing the strongest condemnation of the terrorist attacks of 11 September. I also want to express my condolences to the people and the Government of the United States, and I would like to restate Norway's full commitment to combating terrorism.

The challenge of poverty must be met in a world where the speed of integration is high in all fields and where mutual dependence between countries and regions is becoming ever stronger. Global integration touches many areas such as trade and technology, as well as the environment and the social and cultural fields.

The most imminent challenge ahead of us is not to allow the poorest countries to continue to miss out on the positive political, economic and technological opportunities offered by global integration. This would be unfortunate for industrialized countries and developing countries alike, as both would be unable to take advantage of the opportunities for increased trade, investment and cultural exchange.

One of the most important issues facing us today is financing for development. The United Nations Centre for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has estimated that for the year 2000 foreign direct investment to developing countries amounted to about $240 billion. This is more than five times the total volume of official development assistance (ODA) from the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for the same year, roughly estimated at between $53 billion and $54 billion, which is still low compared to what it was a decade ago, and is definitely too low compared to the need and the estimated targets. The new UNCTAD estimates which indicate a possible substantial decline in foreign direct investment further underline the need for increased ODA. In fact, foreign direct investment tends to benefit the poorest countries only to a very limited degree.

In sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the countries with large numbers of extremely poor people are located, there is also a long-term negative trend in investments. Unless more resources are provided to develop human resources and increase the low investment rates, these countries will continue to be locked into their poverty traps.

One of the main problems in many poor countries is that domestic savings are not channelled into productive investments at home. This deprives the private sector of investment capital and the public sector of much-needed tax revenues. The reason is, of course, that investments in some countries are also seen as very risky by the countries' own citizens. This is especially evident in Africa. In 1990 up to 40 per cent of all African private financial assets were invested outside the continent. Reforms that can bring these and other resources back to Africa are much needed.

This is the purpose, for instance, of the proposal for a multilateral set of investment rules under the World Trade Organization (WTO). Such rules require that all countries accept binding WTO commitments, which would contribute to a more predictable environment for investors. In this context, the principle of equal treatment of foreign and domestic investors is important, and so are simple and transparent national rules, as well as a gradual reduction in protectionist arrangements affecting investments. At the same time, such rules must allow developing countries to develop their own industries.

There is little doubt that countries that have actively integrated into international trade and have put in place more liberal conditions for investments have, in general, seen a larger degree of poverty reduction and, on average, more positive effects on the welfare of their citizens than countries that have failed to implement such policies. On the other hand, we have also witnessed cases of premature liberalization of investment regimes in situations with an absence of adequate national regulatory frameworks and institutions, which can create considerable instabilities and eventually even have negative effects on the world economy in general.

In this respect, sound macroeconomic policies and a well-functioning financial sector under active and qualified public supervision are indispensable factors in securing economic stability and dealing with such serious economic crises. But better global cooperation and regulatory mechanisms must also be put in place, and the existing ones must be made more efficient.

More open world trade with better market access for developing countries and increased direct investment is, in our view, more important for poverty reduction than development assistance, although the poorest countries, which depend on a narrow and price-sensitive range of export goods, cannot do without substantial aid. Protectionism in developed countries costs developing countries at least $100 billion a year — about twice the amount they receive in official development assistance from OECD countries.

This demonstrates that one of the most important contributions developed countries can make to supporting poverty reduction is to open their markets to products from poor developing countries. Technical barriers to trade, in terms of standards, technical regulations and various health and safety requirements, represent a considerable obstacle for exporters from developing countries. Protecting consumer safety without excluding exports from developing countries is a great challenge for all of us. As regards tariffs, developed countries could both walk the extra mile in the international trade negotiations and unilaterally reduce or abolish tariffs on products from developing countries through our Generalized System of Preferences. In this context, I would also like to mention the initiative taken by Norway and the European Union to abolish all tariffs on goods from the least developed countries, the "Everything but arms" initiative.

There is also a need to emphasize the potential that exists for developing countries to reduce their own trade restrictions within the framework of the WTO. In this respect, the next WTO round should explore and take action on the special problems of developing countries in order to develop as fair a set of rules as possible. There is, of course, also a need for assistance to developing countries so as to increase their capacity both to take part in international trade negotiations and to develop national institutions and infrastructure that encourage more trade and product diversification. The developed countries can contribute to this both through the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related and Technical Assistance and through their bilateral development assistance.

The provision of global public goods is both inadequate and vulnerable in the current situation. The countries that benefit most from global integration have a responsibility to assist the more marginalized countries in achieving economic development, which will enable them to contribute towards conserving common natural resources and fighting global crime, as well as securing a well-functioning economic system.

In general, there is a need for more institutionalized cooperation on a global scale, with regard to both the environmental and the economic challenges facing us. These efforts will complement solutions that have been negotiated bilaterally or regionally. Where such global arrangements are already in place, it is important to provide assistance to poor countries so that they can make better use of them.

Inevitably, financial and economic crises will continue to occur in the future. It is very important to prevent such crises from aggravating the situation of the very poor. It will therefore be necessary to establish economic and social safety nets that will secure fundamental needs in crisis situations. Thus, in connection with economic restructuring, it is important to ensure that cuts in public spending do not involve reductions in programmes of special importance for poverty reduction.

The struggle for a better environment and more inclusive trade and investment regimes is bound to be a long one. We must continue to promote the positive aspects of global integration and, equally, intensify our efforts to limit its negative consequences. In this respect, Norway in principle favours a more binding international framework in terms of institutions that have the responsibility for following up agreements, as well as the mandate and the power to enforce them.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like first of all to congratulate Mr. Han on his election as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. We are convinced that under his leadership our discussions on various issues over the next few months will lead to a very positive outcome.

I should also like to join in the universal repudiation of the atrocious terrorist acts perpetrated in this city, in Washington, D.C. and in Pennsylvania on 11 September, and to express to the people and the Government of the United States our heartfelt condolences and solidarity.

While fully supporting the comments made by Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the delegation of Colombia would like to comment briefly on several points that we believe should be taken into account in this dialogue on the integration of developing countries into the global economy in the new century.

The dialogue that we are holding today — which, unfortunately, could not be held at a high level because of the events of last week — should, first and foremost, be yet another contribution to the preparatory process for the International Conference on Financing for Development, scheduled to take place in March 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico.

One of the main concerns of developing countries, especially middle-income countries such as Colombia, is how to achieve and maintain over time our economic growth goals and our development goals in a demanding international environment characterized by the phenomenon of globalization and interdependence.

In Colombia we have tried to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization, modernizing our institutions and opening our economy. We have a hard-working and vigorous private sector; our State is increasingly decentralized; and civil society is participating more than ever before in all areas of national life. For a number of different reasons, however, we have also felt the negative impact of globalization, which, by its very nature, overwhelms and excludes many of us.

We therefore believe that one of the most important objectives to keep in mind throughout our discussion should be finding formulas to ensure that the hard-won accomplishments and progress of some countries are not drastically affected by international economic and financial crises such as those experienced in recent years.

Although it is true that all countries are responsible for their own development, it is no less true that today's interdependence makes us more vulnerable to the actions of others, especially those countries that are large enough to destabilize the global or regional economy. Furthermore, globalization has also exacerbated some of the problems of modern society, including those of illicit drugs, organized crime, money-laundering and terrorism.

Our Government is committed to working steadfastly to deal with such phenomena. Colombian society has made considerable sacrifices and undertaken significant efforts in this respect. Thus, we have the moral authority to invoke the principles of shared responsibility, reciprocity and equity, and we count on the support and participation of all Governments, international financial institutions and United Nations agencies in order to tackle these global problems together. In that context, economic cooperation for development through partnership has an important role to play and should be strengthened in all those areas.

We believe that the United Nations should combat the harmful effects of globalization and foster international cooperation so that the positive impact of globalization can be extended to more regions, nations and peoples. Together with multilateral financial institutions, the United Nations should build a new framework to prevent and overcome economic crises and risks. We need a stable, orderly, transparent, coordinated and predictable financial system under which we can all improve our early warning capacity, effectively control volatility in capital movements and ensure sufficient liquidity to adequately support countries most affected by crises. Another priority is to create social protection safety nets that can be used in times of financial crises.

Developing countries will be able better to integrate ourselves into the global economy when these conditions are met: when our participation in international financial institutions — the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund — is more equitable; when we are able to take part in the decisions that affect us directly; when the international trade system is truly free, open, rules-based, secure, just, non-discriminatory and transparent; and when development is its basic priority.

Another aspect of great importance in this debate is human and technological development. Globalization and the technological revolution have sped up the pace at which the world works. It is obvious that those who possess and have access to technology today — and in particular to information and communications technologies — have clear competitive advantages that enhance their development process and participation in the global economy. The integration of developing countries into the global economy depends to a great extent to access to technology and technological innovations. Until our countries overcome this problem, and until the digital divide is reduced, we will be competing under very difficult and disadvantaged conditions. It is therefore essential to join forces and channel the necessary resources of economic cooperation in this area to foster the creation of new products and processes through research and development; to encourage the use of ecologically sound technologies for producers and consumers; and to promote human development programmes to improve the quality of education at all levels.

Finally, we believe that the development goals outlined by the international community in recent years are the key objectives of our work, namely, the eradication of poverty, the reduction of infant and maternal mortality, universal education, access to reproductive health services, gender equality and sustainable development, among others. Those goals will be feasible only if we observe the guiding values and principles underlying international relations today. Solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, equality, respect for nature and, above all, freedom must prevail so that globalization benefits all of us equally.

Mrs. Jarbussynova (Kazakhstan): Allow me also to join previous speakers in conveying our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people of the United States of America on the tragic events that took place on 11 September this year. We firmly condemn the barbaric acts of terrorism that have taken the lives of thousands of innocent people. Those responsible for organizing these inhuman terrorist attacks against democracy and the free world should be punished for their crimes.

Globalization involves a new level of interaction and interdependence among States. However, along with obvious benefits, globalization entails a danger of lopsided distribution of those benefits. The widening gap between developed and developing countries is a burning issue. In fact, that gap is getting bigger. Debates are under way as to the forms of involvement of both groups of countries in the process of globalization, particularly from the point of view of solving the problems faced by developing countries. In our view, it is very important to strengthen normative, legislative and organizational frameworks in order to ensure the stability and predictability of the world economy.

The process of shaping the international trade system has made an unprecedented contribution to international economic growth. At the same time, despite the progress achieved in the development of international trading relations, direct and indirect tariff barriers continue to be maintained. Those barriers affect a considerable number of goods, some of which are important export items for developing countries. In that connection, there is — in our view — a need for further multilateral efforts. This should be done under United Nations auspices and include the continuation of dialogue between participants in trade relations and the United Nations agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) so as to ensure further liberalization in the sphere of international trade and increase technical assistance to developing countries.

Today, the situation with regard to the future of the World Trade Organization provides a good example of the differences in appraising the globalization phenomenon. Kazakhstan is actively preparing to join the Organization. Steps are being taken to bring our national legislation in the foreign trade sphere into line with WTO principles and rules. The WTO, uniting some 140 States, must now be thoroughly reformed in order to really liberalize and democratize trade relations. It should not be a controlling and selectively discriminating body of world trade policy.

The Bretton Woods institutions also have to be reformed. We believe that the most important goals of the reform of the Bretton Woods institutions are to ensure their openness, democratization, competence and adequacy, and to improve cooperation with the United Nations. We share the criticism of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with regard to its arm-twisting policy when loans are conditioned on many political factors that have nothing to do with the actual economic situation. In the context of the role of the Bretton Woods institutions in the world economy, I would like to mention the issue of integrating the economies in transition into the world economy. The role and importance of that group of countries, including Kazakhstan, in the world economy and politics is growing.

In the second half of 1999, Kazakhstan's economy began to recover from the recession caused by the weak world commodity markets that emerged in August 1998. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth accelerated to 11 per cent in the year 2000 and the first three months of 2001 because of growing domestic consumption, strong exports and the economic recovery in Russia. Today, in circumstances of increased competition in world energy markets, Kazakhstan is paying priority attention to the construction of oil and gas pipelines. The northern Caspian Pipeline Consortium project has been successfully completed. Kazakhstan will be able to double, at a minimum, both its oil production and its export deliveries to foreign markets. We also pin many of our hopes on the development of hydrocarbon resources on the Caspian Sea shelf. For that reason, we believe that the issue of the legal status of that sea is of fundamental importance.

Kazakhstan highly appreciates United Nations efforts to promote the integration of economies in transition into the world economy and counts on continued cooperation with the United Nations in the sphere of consultative services and technical assistance. We appreciate United Nations support for strengthening economic cooperation in the Central Asian region, which is vital to expanding trade, attracting investment, promoting competitive enterprise and improving employment and income prospects. The remoteness and small size of the majority of the domestic markets in the region underscores the particular importance of developing regional markets and promoting inter-regional trade and development.

We believe that, through trade and specialization, the economic pie will grow to the mutual benefit of all countries. Growing prosperity will offer new opportunities to the people of the region. Foreign investors will be attracted by an improved investment climate and better business prospects. Economic cooperation will also contribute to regional stability, which will in turn enhance the trade and investment environment. Ultimately, economic cooperation, together with national development programmes, will serve the greater goal of achieving sustainable economic growth and raising living standards in the region. Countries in the region recognize the importance of reducing policy and regulatory impediments to the cross-border movement of goods and services. They also see the need to address transportation, telecommunications and other infrastructure weaknesses that limit the development of regional markets and inter-regional trade.

Kazakhstan continues to give priority attention to the development of the transit transportation system in Central Asian States and neighbouring developing countries. We think it is important to actively pursue the improvement of existing programmes and the development of new programmes designed to raise the efficiency of the present transit system in Central Asia. Our landlocked country and the region as a whole should have secure, multiple points of access to the world market. It is a matter of strengthening our sovereignty and independence.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have devised a joint special programme for the economies of Central Asia, encompassing all priority issues facing the region, namely, the development of transit capacity and multiple pipeline systems, the management of energy and water resources, environmental protection and technological growth. Such a comprehensive approach promotes better regional cooperation in Central Asia and the integration of its considerable potential into the world economy. It serves common interests. We urge the international donor community to actively contribute to the programme and to promote the economic and democratic growth of Kazakhstan and other newly independent States in Central Asia.

Globalization emphasizes the integrated nature of contemporary world processes. We are convinced that, in the conditions of a mutually interdependent world, no problem can be approached solely from the standpoint of the interests of any one State. In view of the importance of these processes, we support international efforts aimed at ensuring progress, well-being and security for all, and we welcome the leading role of the United Nations in solving the problems we are considering.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, our delegation wishes to express its deepest condolences to the United States delegation, to the people and Government of the United States of America and to the families of the innocent victims of the unprecedented acts of terrorism in New York and Washington, D.C. We share their pain and grieve deeply with them.

Globalization is a complex and multifaceted process that has political, financial, economic, technological, humanitarian, cultural, educational and other dimensions. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition are interested in the prospects offered by this phenomenon, which, along with the visible positive aspects and opportunities for faster development of their economies, also contain some risks of their marginalization, as well as other possible risks.

Today, there is no clear-cut vision of how that process will go. There is an understanding that globalization should lead to the free transboundary movement of financial and economic resources. Along with the necessity of strengthening the banking systems of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and developing their stock markets, globalization also requires unification of the appropriate aspects of national laws, inter alia through the elaboration and conclusion of multilateral agreements. The adoption of such agreements would facilitate smoother integration of the developing countries and countries with economies in transition into the globalizing world economy. We believe that international organizations, including those of the United Nations system, are the most appropriate place to address those issues. In that context, we welcome the work of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on the preparation of two major Internet treaties, which are expected to enter into force before December 2001, and on the adjustment of the international legislative framework to facilitate e-commerce.

Globalization is not an overwhelming, ever-spreading, unmanageable process. It has many streams and aspects that can, and should, be managed in order to facilitate the positive development of globalization. These streams of globalization can change their original direction, or even be reversed, when they encounter obstacles, such as military conflicts, international terrorism, and large-scale natural and man-made calamities, thereby leaving certain countries cut off from the mainstream of globalization.

Despite the Armenian aggression and its severe consequences, the Republic of Azerbaijan strives to contribute to the positive development of globalization by actively participating in global, intra-regional and regional cooperation initiatives. Azerbaijan is a member of a number of regional organizations and initiatives, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova Group (GUUAM), the Eurasian transportation corridor TRASECA, and so on.

For reliable and safe transportation of the increasing amount of oil recovered from the national sector of the Caspian Sea, my country uses alternative routes of export pipelines. The sponsor group for the construction of the main export pipeline was established in October 2000.

It is well known that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are the driving force of globalization. The lack of modern ICT is one of the obstacles confronting many countries with developing economies and economies in transition attempting to effectively integrate into the globalizing world economy. The digital gap between them and developed countries is widening, which hampers the process of globalization and leads to the marginalization of the developing countries. To bridge that gap developing countries and countries with economies in transition need ICT transfers and technical and other forms of assistance from the developed countries and relevant international organizations. In this respect, it is vitally important that developed partners increase their contributions to official development assistance (ODA) in order to reach 0.7 per cent of their respective gross national products and reverse the declining flows of ODA to the countries of the South.

Our delegation believes that the process of globalization has to contribute to the sustainable development of countries, to the integrity and stability of their systems of governance, to the elimination of discrimination in economic relations and to enhancement of the welfare of their peoples.

In October 2000, the sponsor group for the construction of the main Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan export pipeline was established. That pipeline would complement two other already operational oil pipelines. Additionally, the Government is conducting consultations on the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, for the export of large volumes of recovered natural gas.

Like all other members of the group of landlocked developing countries, Azerbaijan suffers from the lack of territorial access to the open sea, remoteness from major international markets and higher transportation costs that inhibit the development of international trade. In order to solve these problems, the Government, in cooperation with the European Commission, conducted in September 1998 in Baku the high-level International Conference on the Restoration of the Historic Silk Route, during which the Basic Multilateral Agreement on International Transport for Development of the Europe-Caucasus-Asia Corridor was signed. This Corridor has connected the participating countries of both continents. The International Secretariat of the Great Silk Route has already started functioning in Baku. There are also ideas on the creation of a Europe-Caucasus-Asia cultural corridor, which will be thoroughly discussed during the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization seminar on culture and tourism to be held in Baku at the end of this year.

The implementation of these projects will contribute to the economic development of the participating countries, strengthen economic cooperation between countries of the two continents and facilitate the realization of other related projects.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that we are approaching three major international events: the Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization in Doha, Qatar; the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The outcomes of these events will have a direct impact on the development of globalization, determining for years ahead its further spread and evolution. I would like to express our delegation's confidence that the concerted efforts of all partners from the North and the South will allow us to cope with the emerging global challenges and threats in this century and to further progress and prosperity on our planet.

Mr. Pradham (Bhutan): Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, allow me to express the deepest and heartfelt condolences of His Majesty the King, the Government and the people of Bhutan to the Government and the people of the United States of America on the valuable lives lost and the tremendous damage done to property by the heinous acts of terrorism launched on 11 September in New York and Washington, D.C. Bhutan vehemently condemns these inhuman acts and declared a day of mourning the next day. In Bhutan, we held a national prayer event at which our King, members of the royal family, cabinet ministers, officials and representatives of civil society, including United States citizens in the country, gathered together in a prayer session for all those who lost their lives or their near and dear ones.

For those of us who represent our countries here in New York, this is also our city. We are equally affected by this crime and we have all lost and suffered in some way or the other.

Bhutan has always strongly denounced the use of terrorism for the achievement of political or other goals. In its wake, terrorism brings death, the injury of the innocent and a disruption of normality within societies, and gives rise to cries for counteraction and revenge. In other words, hatred and violence simply breed hatred and violence. Terrorism has to be rooted out wherever it surfaces. Otherwise, our efforts here in the international community to better the lot of human society by wiping out poverty, fighting against diseases like HIV/AIDS and bringing the benefits of development through globalization will remain a path full of obstacles.

In these most difficult of times, we are happy to see a person of Mr. Han's high calibre, wisdom and experience presiding over the work of the General Assembly. My delegation warmly congratulates him on his unanimous election and will cooperate with him in every way possible. The Republic of Korea represents a people that are one of today's greatest examples of how poverty and underdevelopment can be overcome despite heavy odds.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank his predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, on the achievements of the last session and the great personal efforts he made to make the work of the General Assembly more efficient.

While discussing the issue of integrating the developing countries into the global economy, we have to ensure that the process is equitable and beneficial to them. We have to take the right and sequential steps that are essential to attaining such an objective. Developing countries themselves are at different stages of development or are differently endowed with natural resources or other economic advantages. In this context we have the least developed, the landlocked and the small island developing countries, and the economies in transition. Among the developing nations, there are those that face the debilitating impact of HIV/AIDS, malaria and intense and widespread poverty, and some of them must confront recurring natural disasters, including man-made calamities.

From all our work thus far, the fundamental conclusion that we have come to is that, if the international community is at all to achieve the targets and objectives that it has set, it must address the question of resources. Overcoming the disadvantages of geography; eliminating degrading and abject poverty; winning the war against HIV/AIDS and other serious diseases; and bringing basic health care and education to those who do not have them are the issues which need to be tackled with the highest priority. In most cases, without resources from the international community, these will be goals that may remain in the realm of the impossible.

In conclusion, while acknowledging the inequities arising from the digital divide, our priorities should be clear. We must bear in mind the difference between what are means to an end and not confuse means as ends in themselves. We must be aware of the undue proliferation of activities, especially in view of the resource constraints in the United Nations. Finally, my delegation hopes that our work on the agenda item being considered will be truly meaningful in taking the developing countries, on the basis of justice and equity, into the global economy of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): Before I begin, let me express the sincere sympathy and condolences of my Government and the people of the Republic of Indonesia to the victims of the tragedy that struck this city and nation on 11 September, as well as to their families and friends. They are in our thoughts and prayers. We must also express our deep admiration and respect for the valiant efforts of the police, firefighters, emergency workers and all engaged in the tremendous task of rescue and recovery.

In the aftermath of the horrendous terror attack and the tremendous loss suffered by our host city, New York, and our host country, it is now crystal-clear what confrontation and international terrorism can lead to. Such heinous acts cannot be tolerated. They also partly reflect a severe breakdown in communication and dialogue. We have witnessed over the past week in New York and Washington, I believe, the enormous cost of such a breakdown. Thus, we are convinced that there can be no alternative to coming together to combat terrorism and to engage in sincere and genuine dialogue among all Member States. We must generate inclusive dialogue and solidarity in the face of terror, and we must seriously address the causes that continue to foment it. I strongly believe that part and parcel of a comprehensive approach must be to seek ways and means of stamping out poverty, imbalances and inequality as best we can, since these often represent the virulent breeding grounds that produce extreme and fanatical reactions resulting in devastating consequences. It is for those reasons that we must resolve to strengthen communication and dialogue among all Member States.

Before addressing the issue before us, let me congratulate Ambassador Han Seung-Soo on his well-deserved election to preside over the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. Let me also associate myself with the statement of the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China.

Three years ago this month, the General Assembly held its first high-level renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development. The outcome of the two-day deliberations at that time produced several important conclusions. We must build upon them rather than repeating them. To single out a few of the conclusions of that meeting, globalization was considered an irreversible process, and therefore had to be carefully managed. The outcome also emphasized that action was necessary on a global scale involving the world's leading economies and multilateral institutions. Inclusiveness and participation were imperative to promote a global civic ethic to shape the rules that would ensure that globalization benefited all, including those currently marginalized. Therefore, the dialogue must explore ways to ensure complementarity and the creation of synergy among the various forms of cooperation at the bilateral, regional, inter-regional and multilateral levels, involving not only Governments but also all relevant parts of the United Nations system and other stakeholders. I hope and trust that our discussions over these couple of days will build upon those conclusions and will move forward.

The purpose of the overall theme of this year's renewal of the dialogue is to respond to globalization and to facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy. The dialogue should be seen as part and parcel of the broader intergovernmental process of major United Nations conferences and summits, especially the Millennium Summit, and of the regular work of intergovernmental bodies, especially that of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly and that of the Economic and Social Council.

All countries, developed and developing alike, are seeking how best to increase the integration of their economies into the global economy and to glean benefits from it. But the process is heavily laden with risks as well as opportunities. Free-market forces have increasingly become the arbiter of economic policy-making at the global and national levels. Competitive markets have replaced international cooperation as the driving force of growth and development. In consequence, we have widening economic gaps and a digital divide, which result in poverty, underdevelopment and instability. Effectively addressing these worsening phenomena is our critical collective responsibility, and we must start through genuine dialogue.

Despite important initiatives undertaken by the international community, such as the major United Nations conferences of the early 1990s and the launching of an Agenda for Development, multilateral cooperation for development has continued to retreat. Therefore, we strongly believe that there can be no viable alternative to the renewal of the dialogue so as to revitalize international cooperation for development through a constructive North-South dialogue. The key development issues for such negotiations include trade, finance, debt and technology, including information and communications technology (ICT), which should be negotiated on the basis of mutuality of interests and benefits, shared responsibility and genuine interdependence.

As to the two sub-themes for this dialogue, on generating new public and private financing resources and on facilitating access to ICT for developing countries, we strongly supported their selection for our deliberations at this high-level meeting. We did so since we consider them pivotal both to effectively promoting development and to enhancing the integration of the developing countries into the global economy. What action we must take on these themes is now an imperative question.

As to the financing issue, we must seek ways and means to mobilize the private sector both at the domestic level and in the international arena. We must call for international assistance to help us adopt policy measures and strategies that make our countries attractive and conducive to private financial flows and investment. With regard to ICT, we must ensure that the United Nations ICT Task Force will explore, by every means at its disposal, significantly improving accessibility and connectivity for people, including the rural poor, and especially small and medium enterprises. To do so, we must ensure that the requisite infrastructure, such as telephone wires, telephone systems and community centre Internet access, are in place.

This second high-level dialogue should also benefit from the Millennium Summit. The Summit forged agreement on and prioritized a number of fundamental values seen as essential to international economic relations as we journey into the twenty-first century. Those values are also of importance for facilitating the integration of the developing countries into the globalized world economy. Prime among such values is that of shared responsibility. That is, as stressed by the Millennium Declaration, responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. One of the key objectives identified to translate that shared value into action and to promote the core issues of development was the need for good governance both at the national and the international levels.

While the developing countries recognize their primary responsibility for promoting their own economic growth and sustainable development, they are also very much aware that in an era of globalization they cannot go it alone. They need international assistance and a conducive external environment supportive of development. That must be achieved through genuine dialogue and international cooperation on the basis of mutual interests and benefits, shared responsibilities and partnership. That is a winning recipe. In addition, Governments recognize that they cannot deliver without the cooperation of key actors in the global economy, such as the private sector and civil society. This, too, is the essence of shared responsibility, better global understanding and international economic cooperation.

In meeting the challenge of globalization and in seeking to revitalize the spirit of renewal of the dialogue, we see no better framework than that of the United Nations, an organization whose unique characteristics of universality, neutrality and multilateralism are best suited for benefiting and facilitating all mankind. We are therefore committed to continue strengthening the Organization's role for the promotion of international cooperation for development and as humankind's best hope for realizing our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development. The United Nations can do that by promoting a broad vision of human development, particularly in the primary areas of greater policy coordination and by helping to build human and institutional capacity, including the mobilization of information and communications technologies. By doing so, the integration of the developing countries into the new global economy and their sharing in both its benefits and responsibilities should be facilitated. Only in this way do I see the possibility of halting and reversing the widening economic gap and the digital divide, and thereby promoting development, eradicating poverty and increasing stability for all.

Mr. Sychov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus shares the view of those who have spoken in this Hall who believe that the recent events in New York and Washington are a universal tragedy and a challenge to the international community of nations. We express our deep condolences to the American people and to the loved ones of those who suffered as a result of these terrorist attacks. Today, when terrorism has become global, we need to pool our efforts to eradicate this evil at the national and international levels.

In terms of addressing issues of strengthening international economic cooperation for development based on partnership, let me express the satisfaction of the delegation of the Republic of Belarus that we have convened today's meeting. We view this event as an important additional impetus in considering economic issues on the agenda of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Moreover, in our view, this high-level dialogue should provide considerable input in preparing the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference, to be held in November in Qatar; the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in South Africa in 2002.

Today it has already become axiomatic to say that the achievement of the development goals that have been agreed in the final documents of major conferences and high-level meetings within the United Nations is unthinkable without forging a new consensus on the foundations and principles of international economic cooperation. An early establishment of this kind of consensus is not just an abstract imperative. It is vital for the more than one fifth of the Earth's population who continue to live in abject poverty, primarily in the developing nations.

At this juncture, I believe that we can, with a certain degree of satisfaction, note that there is a gradual movement within the international community in this direction. In this regard, our delegation would like to offer a positive assessment of the current status of the negotiating process in preparing for the International Conference on Financing for Development, which has already become a successful example of establishing true partnership relationships between the Governments, the United Nations system and bodies, the Bretton Woods institutions, the private sector and civil society. The Republic of Belarus hopes that this process will continue to maintain its positive dynamic and will lead to practical results in addressing the most urgent issues involving key issues of mobilizing additional financial resources for development.

In this context, as a singular example of the scope and importance of the issues before us, I would like to mention the assessment contained in the report of the Cedelio Group, according to which simply meeting the obligations in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks could provide the additional benefit to developing countries of about US$ 130 billion annually. Clearly, even partially addressing this issue for developing countries could ensure mobilizing an additional US$ 50 billion per year, which, according to assessments of that same Group, is essential for financing development goals for 2015. Our delegation hopes that the international community will be able to at least begin practical discussion of these problems during the upcoming WTO ministerial conference in Doha. Many already pin hopes on this as a "development round".

In this context, I would particularly like to note that the Republic of Belarus has already undertaken a number of specific steps to meet the interests of developing countries within the framework of access to markets, and today more than 100 developing nations enjoy preferential regimes in trade with our country.

Expanding the framework of the use of information and communication technologies has become one of the key factors in effectively achieving development goals and in the effective integration of nations into the global economic system. In this context, the delegation of the Republic of Belarus welcomes the establishment of an Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, which is extremely promising in terms of its place within the United Nations system and is an encouraging attempt to establish a mechanism for practical partnership between Governments, organs of the United Nations system and the private sector. We hope that this Task Force, acting in strict compliance with the mandate of the ministerial declaration of the 2000 high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council is equal to the tasks set before it in order to reverse and end the dangerous process of a widening so-called digital divide, the costs of which are particularly felt by the developing nations.

I believe that no one would doubt that tangible progress in this area could bring developing countries closer in real terms to achieving their goals in their sustainable development.

Mr. Adam (Israel): At the outset, through you, Sir, my delegation wishes to congratulate the President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly on his election and to thank the Secretariat for preparing this important dialogue.

Israel is pleased to be participating in this high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development. As we enter the twenty-first century, we confront a world with tremendous possibility, but also a world fraught with danger. The world has drawn closer in many ways, thanks to the emergence of global networks for finance and information, as well as the technological innovations that have made them possible. But as we also know, this world also presents us with new threats and growing challenges.

At this high-level dialogue we have gathered to address one such challenge, that of integrating developing countries into these global frameworks and bridging the digital divide. In both respects, Israel possesses a great deal of know-how and expertise, which it has been sharing with countries around the world for more than 40 years.

While dealing with its own digital divide, Israel recently reached out to share its experience with the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and is looking forward to fruitful cooperation in this regard. Israel shares the view that the Task Force should be provided with adequate financial resources and commends the work is has done so far.

Through the Centre for International Cooperation, also known as MASHAV, Israel has shared the knowledge and development experience it has acquired over 53 years of statehood, with over 175,000 trainees from 140 countries around the world.

As our own development expertise has grown, and as our partnership with the private sector and civil society in Israel has expanded, the range of courses offered by MASHAV has also grown, covering areas as diverse as irrigation, desert agriculture, water management, early childhood education, community development, emergency and disaster medicine and many others. In recent years, Israel has also shared the expertise developed in its cutting-edge technology sector.

In the wake of the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, MASHAV has been able to implement a multinational development effort focused on improving agricultural practices and stabilizing the supply of food in Africa. The vicious cycle of war and displacement has jeopardized the supply of basic provisions of life in numerous regions of the continent. In the last two decades, MASHAV has established a number of projects in Africa designed to demonstrate new technologies for diversifying crop production, primarily through the more efficient use of water and irrigation systems. With the cooperation of the United Nations, these projects can be expanded and thereby bring subsistence communities out of the precarious state in which they are now entrenched.

Although the available tools for development have expanded over the past 50 years, Israel remains committed to the same principles that have enabled us to achieve a rapid rate of sustainable development over many years. By maintaining our focus on bottom-up solutions, human capacity-building and cooperative arrangements with other organizations, Israel will remain committed to helping other emerging nations develop their resources and successfully integrate themselves with the rest of the world.

In this regard, we congratulate both the Secretary-General and certain United Nations funds and agencies for launching new and innovative programmes, as well as task forces composed of public and private partnerships, which are essential for ensuring that globalization serves to promote sustainable development.

If ever an event could demonstrate the urgent need to alleviate poverty and provide greater economic opportunity for a greater number of people, it was the tragedy we all experienced here in New York less than 10 days ago. Once the time for mourning has passed and the long process of healing begun, the world will face, amid numerous other challenges, the need to work for the alleviation of conditions that drive individuals to commit extraordinary acts of evil.

I should like to express, on behalf of the Government and people of Israel, our most profound condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of the United States of America and to the friends and families of the victims of those horrendous and tragic terrorist acts.

In this regard, it should be remembered that the Agenda for Development, as adopted by the General Assembly, has a broader objective than mere economic advancement, important as that is. The Agenda is meant to foster greater understanding of emerging global issues and to promote the international cooperation necessary to address them. While it would be a far more gratifying task to direct our energies exclusively to providing greater economic opportunity for all, the challenge of combating terrorism has been thrust upon us in the most catastrophic way imaginable. This is a battle which we no longer have the luxury of avoiding.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like first of all, on behalf of my country, to congratulate Mr. Han on his election to preside over the General Assembly and assure him of the full cooperation of my delegation. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau, whose valuable assistance and steadfast contribution will help to make our deliberations a success.

As our meeting is taking place in the shadow of the sad events that have plunged into mourning not only our host country, but also many other States Members of the United Nations, I should like to convey to them the compassion of the Government of Burkina Faso.

It is not merely for reasons of tradition that the General Assembly has decided to hold another high-level dialogue on the strengthening of international economic cooperation for development through partnership. The holding of this second dialogue has proved necessary in particular because development is now the major concern and preoccupation of States in an environment that is essentially dominated by globalization. This is borne out by the general theme of this debate, which focuses on the integration of developing countries into the global economy of the twenty-first century.

In this regard, much has been said and a number of commitments have been undertaken. One after the other, the multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the regional development banks, have adopted development policies aimed at promoting the integration of developing countries into the world economy. It now remains to accelerate this process.

While the developed countries — in particular the members of the G-8, at their annual summit meetings — are placing increasing emphasis on development issues, the decisions that they take in this regard should not remain mere wishful thinking but should have clear and quantifiable targets capable of freeing the world from poverty.

In this regard, the International Conference on Financing for Development, scheduled to take place next year in Mexico, should provide an opportunity to consider the best means of mobilizing the necessary resources to complement development efforts in the disadvantaged countries. Financing for development will enable the development partners to reform and improve the effectiveness of official development assistance and create favourable conditions for increasing private investment in developing countries.

In this regard, it is vital for the donors to undertake to coordinate their efforts; direct their programmes to the poorest countries; de-link assistance; and harmonize and simplify the procedures and mechanisms that limit the effectiveness of development assistance.

For its part, the Government of Burkina Faso is working to bring about robust long-term economic growth. To that end, it has set a mean growth-rate target of 7 per cent to 8 per cent per year for 2000-2004, based essentially on the activities of the private sector. This will require the establishment of a favourable environment for private investment, particularly through the pursuit of a policy of liberalizing the economy and stepping up reforms aimed at creating a safe and stable legal framework for private investment.

As is well known, new information- and communications-related technology is one of the foundations of globalization. This subject cannot be discussed without acknowledging the paradox that the rate at which the development gap between developed and developing nations is widening is keeping pace with the very technical and technological progress that is supposed to bring nations and peoples together and create wealth for all.

Today, in the developing countries, and in Africa in particular, information technology remains a luxury — indeed, a prestigious commodity reserved for the affluent. Our public administration and our private sector lack the means to acquire the necessary technological tools and to train competent personnel to meet the development challenges.

So how is a country like Burkina Faso, along with all the other neglected countries, to benefit from the positive effects of these new technologies and to reduce the gap between them and the developed countries? Part of the answer could come from the new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Task Force, whose creation was recommended by the Economic and Social Council. We very much hope that it will allow consideration of new formulas for partnership in this area that could help solve development problems.

In pursuing its own modest efforts, Burkina Faso produced in 1999 a plan for developing a national information and communication infrastructure for the period 2000 to 2004, in order to provide radio and television coverage of the entire national territory and establish an Internet network, which would eventually serve all the provinces.

Promoting the integration of developing nations into the global economy and increasing developing nations' involvement in the global information network are the two key objectives of the international community in assisting developing countries. I greatly hope that these meetings will help strengthen the dialogue among all the development actors and partners.

In this regard, the United Nations should use the impetus from the Millennium Summit to channel efforts to promote the integration of developing countries into the global economy.

We must also encourage the good cooperation and dialogue which have existed for some time between the United Nations institutions and the Bretton Woods institutions, for ultimately the efforts of the multilateral organizations will be successful only if they are supported by the political commitment of the member States, particularly the donor countries.

In this respect, we welcome the invaluable assistance of friendly countries to Burkina Faso in its fight against poverty.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): At the outset I would like to convey on behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Croatia our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of all the innocent victims who died in last week's terrorist attacks. These tragic events serve as a painful reminder to us all of the imperative need for the international community to take realistic and comprehensive steps towards suppressing and eliminating terrorism of every kind. My delegation therefore welcomes the timeliness of the President's announcement today that priority will be given to the General Assembly's substantial consideration of this issue by holding the plenary debate as soon as 1 October.

My delegation welcomes the high-level dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through partnership and the opportunity to address the General Assembly on this important agenda item concerning ways to facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy in the face of globalization in the twenty-first century. The dynamic nature of the international economy continues to impinge upon the living conditions of people all over the world. The fact that the disparity between the rich and the poor is still growing should be a primary cause for international concern. With the first anniversary of the Millennium Declaration upon us, a Declaration embracing the historic promises made by world leaders, especially in the area of development and poverty eradication, it is timely for us to revisit and re-examine the notion of a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development through international economic integration and partnership.

Many of us have very specific ideas about the effects of globalization. The problem is that many of these ideas are widely divergent. Despite all the connotations that can be read into globalization, with the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that globalization is unavoidable. Indeed, its impact on issues with which the United Nations has grappled since its inception — namely, poverty and development — has been very mixed. In our endeavours to manage globalization, we all agree that the overriding task for us now is to promote a broader and deeper understanding of the global and transboundary nature of this issue, as well as to enhance international economic cooperation for development as one of the primary instruments to tackle its consequences. However, the means to achieve this must be reviewed in the context of both current and evolving challenges. Indeed, these challenges could easily be exacerbated by the recent, totally unpredicted events which we witnessed last week, and which could create new instability in the world economy, with serious implications for developing countries. The character of the current situation, now more than ever, warrants a more detailed and intensive debate on the agenda before us.

In response to globalization, addressing the question of integrating developing countries into the world economy has inevitably brought about stronger interlinkages between the work of various bodies in the United Nations. Although much has been achieved at the United Nations in the last decade in the direction of coping with and shaping globalization, deepened cooperation with other international and regional organizations needs to be enhanced in a non-hierarchical way.

Given the evolving regional perspectives in this debate, and given innovative regional mechanisms and newly created regional institutions, as well as the strengthening of existing ones, we should not overlook the vital role those mechanisms and institutions have to play. Globalization has contributed to the choice of political priorities of many countries with economies in transition, by making accession to the various regional organizations dealing with economic, trade, security and political issues a top priority, in the knowledge that the contrary would ultimately lead to marginalization. Needless to say, the fragility of Western economic forecasts, highlighted by developments over the last six months, will adversely affect the prospects for economic growth in the Central and Eastern European economies. Furthermore, from the integration perspective, a slowdown in Western European markets poses serious risks for the prospects of European Union enlargement for the region as a whole.

Notwithstanding this, the institutional capacities and universal nature of the United Nations ultimately lend themselves to the United Nations having a pivotal role in building the necessary international consensus for reforms needed for a strengthened and stable international financial system. In particular, allow me to highlight the importance my delegation attaches to hammering out a more prominent role for the Economic and Social Council in the field of sustainable development and economic cooperation.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to support and promote reforms, which encompass dialogue between the Economic and Social Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and improving their outreach to civil society, including the private sector. This will call for an enormous effort in order to consolidate further a global agenda for a strengthened and stable international financial system that is responsive to the priorities of growth and development in an equitable social and economic manner.

Moreover, the functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council that deal with economic, social and environmental issues should be important actors in promoting policy coherence and enhancing the integration of developing countries in emerging global information networks through the promotion of information and communication technologies (ICT). The recent establishment of an ICT Task Force is welcome. Through this body, the United Nations has a unique opportunity to play a catalytic role in the promotion of public awareness of ICT for development, which it should take up without further delay.

Through these joint efforts of global cooperation, exchange and integration and by creating new opportunities for partnerships in the fields of trade, investment, finance, knowledge and technology, the negative effects of globalization can be curbed and transformed into a positive force for all people. At the same time, we must not forget that, fundamentally, the ultimate policy choices lie within States, however difficult those choices may be.

My delegation looks forward to the findings of the joint panel discussions and roundtables during this high-level dialogue. It is the hope of my delegation that the final outcome will provide substantial inputs that will not only build on existing achievements to date but also yield important practical and action-oriented ideas that can be comprehensively utilized in our ongoing process of financing for development and in the work of the Economic and Social Council in its endeavours to bridge the digital divide.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating the President on being elected to preside over our discussions, since this is the first time I have spoken at this session, and to say that you can count on the cooperation of my delegation to help ensure the success of your tenure.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express the profound sadness of the Government and people of my country after the terrorist acts that occurred in the United States of America this past 11 September. We feel particular solidarity with the families of the victims and with the people and Government of the United States of America. We join other peace- and freedom-loving nations in confronting this brutal threat that affects all humanity.

The Argentinian delegation is participating in this high-level dialogue with particular interest because we feel that it provides an excellent opportunity to share our country's position on the current challenges that globalization presents to our developing world. We support this and other initiatives being taken because we hope that the United Nations can play a decisive role in economic and social areas in the coming years by helping developing countries integrate into the world economy and by enabling them to overcome the current conditions of delayed development and poverty and to further their economic and human development.

My country has been endeavouring to achieve sustained economic growth and to overcome the period of recession that began in our country three years ago. This period has been the result of various domestic and international factors, including, of course, the impact of the successive international financial crises that affected several national economies during the decade of the 90s.

We are fully aware that the main responsibility for our development falls to us alone and to our ability to create the conditions of political stability, the rule of law and sufficiently responsible and sober management of public finances, which would limit unproductive government spending, particularly in the civil service, fight administrative corruption and further the campaign against tax evasion. These policies have been carried out consistently in Argentina in recent years, culminating in the recent measure of a zero deficit law, which prevents the State from further borrowing or from spending more than its revenues in order to eliminate any doubt about the sustainability of our fiscal policies with respect to the markets.

As is obvious, the implementation of this policy requires an extraordinary effort from the Argentinean public. However, we are thoroughly convinced that this is the necessary foundation for returning to the road to growth and creating a climate conducive to attracting investment.

It is obvious, however, that, within the framework of globalization we are experiencing, national efforts are not enough if countries face difficulties in trade, which is a vital component for the global integration of developing countries and which naturally plays a decisive role in those countries' development.

The persistence of barriers to the access to the markets of developed countries, in the form of the tariffs, quotas and subsidies for domestic production and exports that exist in those countries, have systematically frustrated the trade opportunities of the developing world and aggravated the economic difficulties affecting the lives of the population.

As was recently stated by the leaders of the Cairns Group, an association of countries with the principal goal of reducing agricultural protectionism, the total assistance to producers in the most developed countries has increased, and we find ourselves in a situation similar to that of 1986, as some markets continue to be highly protected. These distortions in trade and in production are clearly discriminatory since they create asymmetrical trade rules that especially hurt countries that cannot compete with the national treasuries of the rich countries.

The liberalization of international markets for the competitive products of the developing countries and, in my country's case, the liberalization of agricultural markets are not merely an issue of a purely trade character, but a central part of our overall development strategy.

In the discussions that will take place in the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization at Doha, Qatar, next November this problem should not be neglected, and we will focus our action there on the convening of a multilateral round that will necessarily include examination of the agricultural issue, with a specific agenda. That will be our condition for accepting the initiation of a new round of trade negotiations within the framework of the World Trade Organization.

The United Nations has rapidly reacted to these challenges in the economic and social domains. Proof of this is the convening of an international conference on financing for development, to be held next March in Monterey, Mexico. Both the work of the Preparatory Committee and the excellent report by the high-level group headed by the former President of Mexico, Mr. Ernesto Zedillo, have taken note of this problem in trade. They also take note of the need that the new round of trade negotiations be a "round in favour of development", for the benefit of developing countries and in the interest of the most developed countries. As that report affirms, "In the global village, someone else's poverty very soon becomes one's own problem: of lack of markets for one's products, illegal immigration, pollution, contagious disease and insecurity ..."

Our country has been working to expand its markets and, as has occurred in other regions, Argentina first concentrated its efforts on its relations with neighbouring countries, to which we are tied by shared history and affinities that go beyond the area of trade. Through Mercosur, expanded to include Bolivia and Chile, we continue our task of creating an integrated regional bloc, designed as an open type of regionalism and ready to promote the area's trade and economic integration with other regions. Mercosur hopes to move towards an integration of the entire hemisphere in the coming years, within the framework of a free trade zone in all the Americas, which should be completed by 2005. We have recently also initiated the so-called "four + one" negotiations among the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) and the United States with the same purpose of expanding trade liberalization and the openness of our respective markets.

It is along those lines that we view our integration into the world economy in the twenty-first century. But even if we are able to achieve significant advances in domestic policy reform, in the liberalization of trade and in direct investment flows to developing countries, international cooperation for development will continue to be essential for countries that do not have sufficient flows of private investment or that must cope with humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters requiring urgent attention. The role played by loans from multilateral banks and official development assistance is essential to those countries.

We also wish to express the hope that we will attain the goal of having official development assistance reach 0.7 per cent of industrialized countries' gross domestic product. We trust that the Monterrey conference will make it possible to hold an extensive debate on these issues vital to development and the eradication of poverty.

Finally, we would like to express our keen interest in the full participation of developing countries in the extraordinary benefits of the revolution in information and communications technologies. We need not go into detail about the impact that that process has on economic growth and the promotion of trade and in increasing investment. Nevertheless, there is a great risk that the so-called digital divide will further marginalize the developing world away from being able to take advantage of this new opportunity.

We hope that, once the current difficulties are overcome, the Secretary-General will be able to announce the launching of a public-private task force that will, while working in close coordination with existing initiatives such as the one being promoted by the Group of 8, guide the efforts that will make universal access to information and communications technologies a reality. Our country, which is carrying out projects at the national level to expand and promote the use of the Internet in the area of education, would like to participate in that task force in order to contribute and exchange experiences.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation for the opportunity given to us to discuss effectively the ways to respond adequately to the current challenges of globalization. We place our hopes in the decisive role to be played by the United Nations in that process.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): As this is the first time that I take the floor during this session, I would like to say that Egypt condemns the criminal terrorist acts that took place in Washington, New York and Pennsylvania. We express the deepest condolences of the people and Government of Egypt to the American people and the American Government.

In a world of increased globalization and interdependence, partnerships constitute an essential mechanism for promoting development. They are not a luxury or a choice that countries may or may not consider. This is particularly true with regard to the process of integrating developing countries into the international economic order in a healthy and orderly manner. However, in order for these partnerships to produce their intended results all resources and efforts need to be mobilized to create a set of national and international conditions that are crucial for the successful implementation of such partnerships.

Looking at the issue from a wider perspective, partnerships entail the collaboration and coordination of all efforts at the national and international levels. In our view, partnerships include many actors at the national level, namely, the State and its national institutions, the private sector and civil society. On the international level partnerships include donor countries, multilateral economic institutions, and international civil society, in addition to the international private sector, particularly large transnational corporations.

There is absolutely no doubt that the primary responsibility for formulating development strategies and policies in developing countries is a national one. In this regard, the challenges and potential opportunities provided by globalization dictate the need for forging partnerships on the national level. This is achieved through improved governance structures, capacity-building and raising the standards and modes of operation of domestic institutions, in addition to increasing and improving coordination between various national actors in the area of development. That also requires popular participation through activation of the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In many cases, the achievement of these standards and goals requires immense human and material resources that are beyond available national means.

In that regard, partnerships between Governments and the private sector play a vital role in closing the existing financial gap and in releasing the immense energy and creativity of the private sector in promoting the development process. Civil society also plays a crucial role in this regard by mobilizing additional resources and distributing the fruits of development in a more equitable manner, in addition to the strong supervisory role it plays in preserving the gains from development, and by expanding the margin of popular participation in strengthening development efforts.

It is not possible for any national effort to achieve economic growth and development within the context of a real constructive spirit of national partnership without the existence of an enabling healthy environment at the international level that promotes development. An international environment that assigns due priority to correcting existing imbalances within the international economic system is crucial. These imbalances could be, inter alia, the result of the negative impact of policy decisions by large developed economies on smaller and weaker ones, or the result of the lagging institutional development of multilateral economic institutions that have not been able to adjust to international economic and political developments with appropriate speed. Hence, there is a need to address such imbalances to make policy decisions more responsive to the development circumstances of developing countries, and to take into account the interests of all members of the international community, and not only the narrow interests of a few number of countries or a minority of large economic entities.

In the light of all this, we see an urgent need for the United Nations and the international community to end once and for all the impotent dialogue that attempts to distort the evolution of a comprehensive international vision for development. This dialogue attempts to concentrate only on the national or international dimensions and efforts to deal with the dilemma of economic development in this age of rapid globalization. As we recognize the primary national responsibility of countries to formulate their development strategies and policies, we also do not accept the distorted view that reduces the international dimension to a superficial supportive role in strengthening development efforts.

True partnerships require sincere and constructive engagement to correct imbalances at the national and international levels. It also means that the international community should overcome existing views with regard to the roles assigned to the donor countries, the international private sector and multilateral economic institutions, and should start formulating a more positive and engaging role that is more responsive to the development needs and circumstances of developing countries. These revised roles should be honest in recognizing both the responsibilities and duties of all parties at both the national and international levels, within a true spirit of partnership that takes into consideration the right of all peoples of the world to develop and prosper.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.